HINDLIP (OLD) HOUSE.

WORCESTER SECTS;

OR

A HISTORY

OF THE

ROMAN CATHOLICS & DISSENTERS

OF

WORCESTER.

By JOHN NOAKE,

Author of *The Rambler*, &c.

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"Men that are angry for *God*, paſſionate for *Chriſt*, that can call names for Religion and fling ſtones for Faith, may tell us they are Chriſtians if they will, but nobody would know them to be ſuch by their fruits. To be ſure, they are no Chriſtians of *Chriſt's* making."---*William Penn.*

Preface.

THE object for which this work was written is twofold: firſt, to preſerve and put in permanent form the records and materials for the hiſtory of each religious denomination in *Worceſter;* and, ſecondly, to inculcate humility and Chriſtian forbearance, by producing undeniable evidence that religious perſecution was not confined to any one body of Chriſtians, but was freely exerciſed by whatever party attained to power.

In carrying out this main deſign---which has occupied twelve months of cloſe reſearch and conſtant employment of the little leiſure afforded by an arduous profeſſion---many incidental reſults of an intereſting and uſeful kind have likewiſe been attained. More light has been thrown on the manners and cuſtoms of our anceſtors---

their thoughts, their religious opinions, their domeſtic and ſocial life. Details have been preſerved as to localities and now almoſt forgotten names of ſtreets, habitations, and places of worſhip; beſides liſts (as far as poſſible) of the original members of each denomination in the city, many of whoſe deſcendants are ſtill living, and brief biographies of departed miniſters of the Goſpel whoſe memories are had in reverence and eſteem for their Chriſtian worth and uſefulneſs. A new verſion of ſome of the circumſtances attending the Gunpowder Plot, tranſlated from Jeſuitical and other ſources, with accounts of miracles and executions---which I have no doubt will be read with great intereſt---has been provided. The old houſe at *Hindlip*---one of the reſorts of the conſpirators---forms the ſubject of the frontiſpiece. That houſe was pulled down about forty years ago, to the great regret of all who valued antiquity and hiſtorical aſſociation; and the preſent manſion---a ſquare brick building, its principal front having four Ionic pillars ſupporting an entablature---was erected.

I have alſo thought it deſirable to commence each chapter with a brief account of the origin

of the ſect to which it is devoted, and to introduce ſo much of its general hiſtory as would be neceſſary to elucidate and explain the local materials now brought together; alſo to enliven the work with ſketches and anecdotes of founders of ſects, popular preachers, and others intimately or incidentally connected with the city (ſeveral of whom are ſtill living), with ſpecimens of their pulpit productions.

The great bulk of my material was new, and gathered from multifarious ſources, as indeed the following pages will bear witneſs; the labour, therefore, has been very great for ſo ſmall a reſult; yet I truſt it will not be deemed unacceptable to the public.

Some of the records of which I have availed myſelf, there is reaſon to believe, would have been loſt altogether but for my timely inquiries after them; now, however, by the aid and interpoſition of the printing preſs, ſuch an accident would be rendered leſs regrettable, and this work I hope will be conſidered a truſtworthy and permanent record and book of reference for each denomination whoſe hiſtory is brought under review.

Although I have not ſcrupled freely to expreſs my opinions wherever I deemed it needful, this, I truſt, will not be conſidered to detract from the merit of the work, as not a ſingle word has been penned in bitterneſs of ſpirit or with a view to create animoſity. The judicious *Hooker* was worthy of all praiſe when he predicted that "there would come a time when three words uttered with charity and meekneſs ſhould receive a far more bleſſed reward than three thouſand volumes written with diſdainful ſharpneſs of wit."

It will be obſerved that frequent mention is made of other towns and places in the county and diſtrict; but this is purely incidental, and to undertake the religious hiſtory of each town in the county would have been too coloſſal an undertaking for one whoſe time is ſo limited.

A copious index has been prepared, under the conviction that many books loſe much of their value, as works of reference, from a lack of this very neceſſary adjunct.

On a digeſt of the facts brought together in this little production, I think my readers will agree with me in the expreſſion of thankfulneſs

that our lot has not been caſt in thoſe days when magiſtrates acted without law, juſtice, or humanity; when no religious and but little civil liberty exiſted; when ſuperſtition, ignorance, and a lack of many of the phyſical comforts we now enjoy, were the chief characteriſtics of ſociety in theſe iſlands.

Long prefaces being an abhorrence to me, it only now remains to expreſs my gratitude to the kind patrons whoſe names appear on the dedicatory page, and alſo to tender my acknowledgments to the following gentlemen, who kindly aſſiſted my literary labours, and afforded me facilities for the examination of records, &c.: Revs. *W. Waterworth*, *T. Dodd*, and *J. M'Owan;* Aldermen *T. R. Hill* and *Lewis;* Meſſrs. *Grove*, *Stanley Pumphrey*, *T. Baxter*, *Ward*, and *Vellacott*; as alſo to the librarians and authorities of the Britiſh Muſeum Library, and that of the Society of Antiquaries, Somerſet Houſe, in both of which noble inſtitutions I met with the utmoſt courteſy and kindneſs.

J. N.

Britannia Square, *Worceſter*,
December, 1860.

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WORCESTER SECTS.

—o—

The Catholics.

"THE true ſpirit is to ſearch after GOD and for another life with lowlineſs of heart; to fling down no man's altar, to puniſh no man's prayer; to heap no penalties and no pains on thoſe ſolemn ſupplications which, in divers tongues, and in varied forms, and in temples of a thouſand ſhapes, but with one deep ſenſe of human dependence, men pour forth to GOD."---SYDNEY SMITH.

IN few *Engliſh* cities were more important changes effected by the great religious Reformation than in *Worceſter*. The principles of *Wickliffe* had taken root here long before *Henry VIII* had acquired for himſelf the title of "Defender of the Faith," and the public mind had been gradually prepared for that religious movement which was cradled in *Germany* but attained its fulleſt development in this iſland. As early as the year 1409, *Thomas Badley*, a tailor of *Worceſter*, was arraigned before the

Biſhop and convicted of hereſy becauſe he denied that any prieſt could make the body of *Chriſt* ſacramentally. He ſaid "it was ridiculous to imagine that *Chriſt* at His laſt ſupper held His own body in His hand and brake and divided it; and if every conſecrated hoſt was *Chriſt's* body, then there muſt be in *England* no leſs than 20,000 gods." After this he was examined before the Archbiſhop of *Canterbury*, and great pains were taken to make him recant, but without effect, and the Archbiſhop confirmed the ſentence of his Right Rev. brother of *Worceſter;* whereupon *Badley* was burnt at Smithfield. The Prince of *Wales* was preſent on the occaſion, and having compaſſion on the man, he cauſed the fire to be extinguiſhed, and offered *Badley* a penſion if he would recant, but the poor man continued firm in his faith, and ſo was burnt.

In 1522 the high croſs before *Worceſter* Guildhall was defaced, though the local records do not ſtate whether this was a demonſtrative act of the *Worceſter* population, or done by order of the civic rulers. It was ſixteen years later that the images of *Walſingham*, with thoſe of *Ipſwich*, *Worceſter*, *Welſdon*, and other places, were taken to *London* and burnt at *Chelſea*; and ſome thirty or forty years afterwards that "the high croſs over againſt the *Worceſter* toll-ſhop" and others at the Cathedral and the

"Graſs-croſs" were ordered to be taken down. In 1535, *Henry* declared war againſt the pretenſions of the Pope, and ordered the Earl of *Eſſex* to inſtitute meaſures for apprehending all prieſts and curates who "ſet forth and extolled the jurisdiction and authority of the Biſhop of *Rome*, otherwiſe called Pope." No one can now reaſonably ſuppoſe that *Henry* had changed his religious principles---if he ever poſſeſſed any---only on one radical point he differed from the Catholic body, viz., in preferring himſelf to exerciſe the office of Pope, that his brutal and filthy paſſions might be indulged without check or reſtraint. Among the early victims of that reign, a friar named Dr. *Forreſt* was condemned for denying the royal ſupremacy; a large wooden ſtatue of the virgin was brought from *Wales* to make the death-fire, and *Latimer*, Biſhop of *Worceſter*, preſided at the execution. While preaching to the poor friar, as he hung ſuſpended in the flames, the Biſhop exceeded his uſual eloquence, and aſked the half-conſumed victim what ſtate he would die in; but the friar, in a bold voice, anſwered, "that if an angel ſhould come down from heaven and teach him any other doctrine than he had received and believed from his youth, he would not now believe him;" and ſo he was hanged and burnt. Perhaps this incident (given on the authority of *Stowe's*

Annales), of a Proteſtant Biſhop of *Worceſter* preſiding at the execution of a friar, will be new to many of my readers; but one object of this work is to prove that religious perſecution was not confined to Catholics or any other ſect of Chriſtians; it was the weapon uſed by all who attained to a predominance in the ſtate; it was the ſpirit of the age and not of a party: Biſhop *Jewell* himſelf, one of the bright lights of the Reformation, approved the theory of burning heretics, as alſo to a certain extent did *Jeremy Taylor*, who was a great champion of religious liberty.

In the viſitation of the monaſteries *Latimer* was extremely active, and in the year 1539 the Benedictines of *Worceſter* Priory put on ſecular habits and ſurrendered, after their order had been in poſſeſſion of the church of *Worceſter* for 570 years. All our cathedral priories, except *Carliſle*, and moſt of the richeſt abbeys in *England*, were held by Benedictines. *William More*, the then Prior of *Worceſter*, had foreſeen the coming ſtorm, and ſagaciouſly made terms with the mammon of unrighteouſneſs, reſigning his comfortable poſt on condition that he ſhould enjoy *Crowle* Houſe (about four miles from *Worceſter*) with plate, linen, and furniture, and occaſional lodgings at the priory, the keep of two geldings, fuel at *Worceſter* and *Crowle*, a monk to wait

on him, a penſion of 50*l.* per annum, 1000 marks down on the nail, and the payment of all his debts, which amounted to 100*l.* *Green* ſays that he had alſo the manor of *Grimley*. The houſe to which the ex-prior retired is ſtill in exiſtence, near the church at *Crowle*, and his coffin-ſlab may be found, after ſome difficulty, in the interior of the church. *Henry Holbech*, *alias Randes*, was the laſt nominal prior; he had been conſecrated Biſhop-ſuffragan of *Worceſter*, with the title of Biſhop of *Briſtol*, and on the ſurrender of the priory he was appointed the firſt Dean, and ſubſequently Biſhop of *Rocheſter* and *Lincoln*. *John Barlow* ſucceeded him as Dean in 1544; and in 1553, *Philip Hawford*, the laſt Abbot of *Eveſham*, became Dean in return for having ſurrendered ſo eaſily his own abbey ſome years before. All this was but a change of name, and a promotion of pliable men in the place of thoſe who maintained on principle that *Henry* was not *de jure* the head of the church of *Chriſt* in theſe realms. The creed and ceremonials of the church had undergone but little variation, nor had the Romiſh ſpirit of perſecution died out at this early period of our tranſitional progreſs; for I find that, in the laſt year of this king's reign, a lad of twelve years of age, named *John Davis* (nephew of *Thomas Johnſon*, an apothecary of *Worceſter*), for reading the *Teſtament* and other

good Engliſh books, was horribly treated in a dungeon at the *Worceſter* Guildhall, called "the Peephole," after having been removed from the cell into which he was firſt put, and where they teſted his powers of endurance by holding his finger in a candle, but, as the hiſtorian gravely aſſures us, "without any viſible effect upon the finger or the boy's form of mind." He was then put in iron bolts, and made to lie on the cold damp ground, with only two ſheepſkins to cover him, nor allowed to be viſited by any of his friends. The Papiſts (ſays the chronicler, *Fox*, in his *Book of Martyrs*) made great threats at him, and even put a madman for his companion, who threatened his life with a large knife. The poor boy was to have been tried before the Judges, but ere their arrival the King went to his long account, "and the force of the law was ſtayed." *Davis* was nevertheleſs arraigned before the Judges, *Portman* and *Marven*, who ordered him to be whipped, but a Mr. *Bourne* (afterwards Sir *John Bourne*, Secretary of State, who reſided at *Battenhall*), declared to the Judges that he had had whipping enough, and then took him to his houſe and well treated him, but at laſt put him away for fear he ſhould infect their ſon *Anthony* with hereſy. *Davis* afterwards became "a profitable miniſter in the Church of England." This account, written by *Davis*

himſelf, is abridged in *Fox's Martyrs*, but has been recently publiſhed in full by the Camden Society, and ably edited by my excellent friend, Mr. *John Gough Nichols*, F.S.A.

The ſhrines of St. *Oſwald* and St. *Wulſtan*, in *Worceſter* Cathedral, had been taken down in 1538, and the bones of the ſaints, together with thoſe of Biſhop de *Conſtantiis*, were wrapped in lead and buried at the north ſide of the high altar---a ſufficient indication that the relics of thoſe great men were expected to interfere no more in human affairs, and might now reſt in peace with the aſhes of their fathers. For the firſt time on Candlemas Day, 1547, no candles were hallowed or borne, nor were aſhes hallowed on Aſh Wedneſday; the high altar was taken down to the ground in 1551; and on May 13th, 1560, Biſhop *Sandys* began his viſitation at *Worceſter*, when the crucifix and images of Our Lady were burnt in the yard of the Cathedral. The image of Our Lady was a very large one, and had been held in great reverence, but when ſtripped of the veils that covered it, our reformers found out that it was a ſtatue of a biſhop, ten feet high! By that time, not only had the Papal dominion come to an end in England, but the religion of which His Holineſs was the chief hierarch had ceaſed to be the profeſſed religion of the Engliſh nation; the odours of its incenſe

had evaporated, and the glories of its ſplendid altars faded away; its proceſſions and pageants no longer delighted the maſſes of the people, and the functions of its vaſt and complicated machinery ceaſed their movements. Then were croſſes, chalices, cenſers, and pyxes, made into ſilver pots and cups "for the communion table," or uſeful veſſels "for Mr. Dean and common hoſpitality;" while copes and veſtments were transformed into coverings for the communion table or cuſhions for the choir and church. In an inventory of the Priory furniture at the Diſſolution, among other things are the following:

"Item, Seynt *Oſwalde* and Seynt *Ulſtans* hede with ſelvr and gylte---a myter for Seynt *Oſwalde* hede---with ſtonys ſet ther ynn, a arme of Seynt *Edmunde* the Byſshoope, ii woode coveryde with ſelver gylte,---a arme of Seynt *Romane* the Byſshope coveryde yn certen placis with ſelver, ii ſmall ſryms---gylte with lyttle ſtonys yn the wiche ther bynn certen relyquis of Seynt *Oſwalde* and Seynt *Wlſta*---coveryde with ſelvr, a moyle of Seynt Oſwalde una vitta cirra caput Ste *Margarete*---with ſelver, with other garnyſſynge with ſelver abowte the hede, xi thouſande V'gyns, in parte of a ſkul---of *Herfford's* tombe garnyſſyde in golde and gylte with ii rynges, ii old pannes of xvi galands, a pe—— baſen to tempr wax ther yn, a tryvett."

Thus was the genius of Popery unrobed, and

"with ſighing ſent" from all her ancient groves. The friars, too, ſhared no better fate than their brethren the monks, for among other eſtabliſhments broken up in *Worceſter* at the Reformation were---

1.---The Franciſcans or Grey Friars, founded by a *Beauchamp*, ſome relics of which eſtabliſhment, eſpecially the refectory, remained till within living memory on the ſite of the preſent City Gaol. At the Suppreſſion, this eſtabliſhment was granted to the bailiffs and citizens of *Worceſter*, who paid yearly a rent to the crown.

2.---The Dominicans, or Black (preaching) Friars, whoſe houſe was ſituate at the back of Broad Street, alſo founded by a *Beauchamp* of *Powick*, about the time of *Edward III.* In the twenty-firſt year of that reign they had a grant of a piece of ground within the city walls, called "Bellaſſes," to build their houſe upon. At the Diſſolution, this houſe was alſo granted to the bailiffs and citizens of *Worceſter*.

3.---The Trinity Guild; founded by *Richard Norton*, 45th of *Edward III*, being a brotherhood or charity of three prieſts or chaplains, to ſing maſs perpetually for the ſoul of the founder and for all Chriſtian ſouls, and to help the parſon and curate of the pariſh church in time of need, "becauſe it doth abound of houſeling people." At the Diſſolution it paſſed into various hands, and the Trinity Hall became the property of the corporation of weavers, walkers, and clothiers.

4.---The White Ladies' Nunnery, founded by a Biſhop of *Worceſter* before the Norman con-

queſt. If I miſtake not, the preſent worthy incumbent of St. *Swithin's* ſtill receives a portion of his income as chaplain or father confeſſor to theſe poor white ladies, who have ſo long formed one of the unrealities of life; former incumbents were their confeſſors, and at the ſuppreſſion of the nunnery it was granted to *Richard Callowhill*, and the ſite is now held under the governors of Queen *Elizabeth's* School in this city, while a portion of its income was ſecured to St. *Swithin's* living. Of courſe, ſhould the Proteſtant eſtabliſhment take a monaſtic turn, the Rev. *R. Sarjeant* and his ſucceſſors will have to do duty in the confeſſor line, for value already received.

5.---St. *Oſwald's*, eſtabliſhed for monks infected with leproſy, afterwards changed into a lodging houſe for the wayfarer, and ſubſequently into almſhouſes, was *not* diſſolved at the Reformation, but merely transferred into the Proteſtant cuſtody of the Dean and Chapter.

6.---The Commandery, founded by St. *Wulſtan* in Norman times, as a religious order of St. *Auguſtine*, profeſſing chaſtity, poverty, and obedience. The maſters of this order aſſumed the title of *præceptores*, or commanders, and hence the name of the eſtabliſhment, which has remained to this day. Soon after the Diſſolution, the houſe and its poſſeſſions were conveyed to *T. Wylde*, clothier, from whence Wylde's Lane takes its name.

7.---Chantries in many of the pariſh churches.

8.---A "Convent of *Fratres de pænitentia Jeſu Chriſti*," or "Friars of the Sack," made a ſettlement here *temp. Henry III;* and ſome "Friars of the Holy Trinity, for the redemption of cap-

tives," were ſaid to have been located between Angel Lane and Broad Street, but I have met with no information whether theſe were in exiſtence at the time of the Reformation.

In the firſt year of *Edward VI* the council iſſued injunctions for removing images from all churches, and during a general viſitation the roſary and maſs were doomed; the Biſhops and clergy were ſummoned to take the oath of allegiance and to make uſe of the new book of homilies and *Eraſmus's Paraphraſe*. In the month of November after *Henry's* death, at the meeting of Parliament, maſs was ſung in Engliſh for the firſt time. The *Worceſter* parochial records do not go back to this date except the books of St. *Michael's* pariſh, in which the progreſs of the Reformation under the young King is diſtinctly ſet forth. A man was employed in that little church to hew down the images and whitelime the walls; the holy water pot and certain organ pipes were ſold for 2*s*. 10*d*., and all other furniture appertaining to the exploded ceremonies was diſpoſed of at what would be called (in modern drapers' ſlang) "an alarming ſacrifice." Moreover, the churchwardens and their friends, who made out an inventory on the occaſion, took care to make merry at a tavern over the fallen fortunes of the old diſpenſation and the brighter advent of the new. Boards on treſtles were

ſubſtituted for the altar, and inſtead of ſculptured ſaints and feneſtral emblazonment, a man was engaged to write the Scriptures (on the walls) and paint the church at 2*d.* per yard.

Deſperate efforts were at that time made in *Devonſhire* and other counties to reſtore the old religion, and the Catholics oppoſed the King's preachers to the face; but their attempts were uniformly defeated. *Heath*, then Biſhop of *Worceſter*, had proteſted againſt the new ordinal and form of ordination drawn up by virtue of an Act of Parliament, and refuſing to ſubſcribe thereto he was ſent to the Fleet and deprived of his biſhopric, *Hooper* being his ſucceſſor.

At Queen *Mary's* acceſſion to the throne, the altars of the proſcribed faith were again erected; and the cryſmatory, cenſer, and pyx, once more appeared in the inventory of St. *Michael's* church, with the paſcal taper, wax, and frankincenſe. To the credit of many of the biſhops in *Mary's* reign be it recorded that they had but little ſtomach for ſuperintending the ſanguinary ſcenes which then diſgraced the Engliſh rule, and generally they left all the work and wickedneſs to others, as at Briſtol, to *Dalby*, the chancellor, who appears to have been ſo fond of the fiery element in this world that it is hoped his earthly taſtes have not been conſulted in that to which he has ſince gone.* Indeed it has been juſtly

* See the *Briſtol Church-goer.*

ſaid, that we can hardly credit hiſtory or our ſenſes, at this diſtance of time, to think that there could have been a period in our annals, or a people amongſt our anceſtors, when and by whom ſuch wanton and inſane cruelties could have been perpetrated. But theſe acts of *Mary's* time were only the temporary glare thrown out by a dying flame. The five years' reſuſcitation of the old faith had probably done more than all previous experiences to confirm the national abhorrence of Popery, nor did the blood of Proteſtants ſo freely ſhed during that brief period appeal to heaven in vain. The knell of the *Romiſh* creed in *England* was rung and the day of retribution was at hand. Nevertheleſs all good Chriſtians muſt regard with horror the vindictive violence with which the nation avenged itſelf on a perſecuting prieſthood, fallen from power. Chriſtian charity might have ſuggeſted to our Puritan forefathers the exerciſe of that toleration and forbearance which they had ſought in vain at the hands of men whoſe creed neceſſarily enforced the extermination of heretics. But, alas for human weakneſs, the truth muſt be told, even if it diſabuſe many a Proteſtant reader of fondly cheriſhed hallucinations, begotten by one-ſided hiſtories, written from a ſtand-point of the groſſeſt partiality. *Moſheim* ſays it is an obſervation often made, that all religious ſects,

when they are kept under and oppreſſed, are remarkable for inculcating the duties of moderation, forbearance, and charity, towards thoſe who diſſent from them, but that as ſoon as the ſcenes of perſecution are removed, and they in their turn arrive at power and preëminence, they forget their own precepts and maxims, and leave both the recommendation and practice of charity to thoſe who groan under their yoke.

With the acceſſion of Queen *Elizabeth* (1558) commences the real hiſtory of the perſecution of the Catholics in this country; and thoſe who inveſtigate that hiſtory with fairneſs cannot but admit that, whether in reference to the Catholic clergy or laity, more noble examples of heroic fortitude, patience, long-ſuffering, and unyielding avowal of what they believed to be the truth, have never been preſented in any period of the world's hiſtory or in any phaſe of "man's inhumanity to man." It is probable that at this period the two great religious parties---the Catholics and all who diſſented from them---were nearly equal in numbers throughout the country, and it may be readily imagined that antagoniſtic feelings everywhere pervaded ſociety to an extent almoſt ſubverſive of ſocial order and individual ſecurity. Inſtances of this occurred at *Worceſter*. Sir *John Bourne*, of *Holt* Caſtle, lord of the manor of *Battenhall* (St. *Peter's* pariſh, *Worceſter*),

who was one of the principal Secretaries of State in the time of *Mary*, and a great enemy to the Reformation and the Proteſtant Biſhops, is ſaid in *Strype's Annals* to have inſulted Mrs. *Wilſon*, wife of the Dean of *Worceſter*, in 1563, and the wife of a prebendary, by taunting them with being the wives of prieſts---a condition which the Catholic party looked upon as little better than one of adultery; and a violent affray took place between the ſervants of the reſpective parties in conſequence. In *Strype's* relation great ſtreſs is laid upon the fact that Mrs. *Wilſon* was a gentlewoman, and hence the inference that Sir *John Bourne* was "no gentleman." Dr. *Wilſon*, the huſband of this lady, was one of the judges at Frankfort, in 1557, to decide the religious diſputes which began to ariſe among the refugees, and giving origin to that diſſenſion which afterwards ſo miſerably rent and divided the Church of *England*. Here he was diſtinguiſhed among the principal divines who exerted their abilities on the occaſion, his name being ſubſcribed to a plan for amending their diſcipline. In 1562-3 he was choſen by the Dean and Chapter of *Worceſter* to repreſent them in the *Weſtminſter* Aſſembly; and although he would have gone further in the abolition of what he conſidered Popiſh remains, when it was carried againſt him he did not deem theſe indifferent things a ſufficient ground to

juſtify his ſeparation from the Eſtabliſhed Church. He voted for the famous ſix articles: 1. To aboliſh all holy days except thoſe of *Chriſt* and Sundays; 2. For the miniſter in time of prayer to turn his face to the people; 3. To omit the croſs in baptiſm; 4. To leave to the diſcretion of the Ordinary the order of kneeling at the communion; 5. For the miniſter to uſe the ſurplice only in time of divine ſervice and the ſacraments, and that no miniſter officiate but in a comely garment (this was meant to alter the ſacerdotal habits further from thoſe uſed in the *Romiſh* Church); and, 6. To remove organs out of churches. Theſe articles were thrown out of the lower houſe by a majority of only one.

Sir *John Bourne* was alſo known as the perſecutor (in the time of Queen *Mary*) of Mr. *Edward Underhill*, a Proteſtant, one of the band of Gentlemen Penſioners, and nephew of *Robert Winter*, of *Wych*, county of *Worceſter*. When the ſaid *Underhill* was examined before the council on a charge of making "a ballatt againſt ye Papiſtes," he ſeems to have had the beſt of the argument with Sir *John*. The latter admitted that *Underhill* had come of a "worſhipful houſe in *Worceſterſhire*," and regretted that he was "a heritike knave," and had "ſpent his levynge wantonly." *Underhill* replied that he had conſumed no part of his living until he came into "the Kynges

ſarvis," and added---"I parſeave you *Borne's* ſon of *Worſeter*, who was beholdon unto my uncle *Wynter*, and therfore you have no cauſe to be my enemy; nor yow never knew me, nor I yow before now, wich is too ſoone." "I have harde enough off yow," ſaid *Bourne*. "So have I off you," replied *Underhill*, "how that Mr. *Sheldone* drove you oute of *Worceterſhire* for your behavyoure." In the reign of *Elizabeth*, Sir *John Bourne*, being ſteward of the church of *Worceſter*, entered into great diſputes with the new Proteſtant Biſhop, *Edwin Sandys*, which led to various frays in *Worceſter*, and eventually to Sir *John's* impriſonment for ſix or ſeven weeks in the Marſhalſea, as narrated by *Strype*.

Another little illuſtration of the times may be found in the hiſtory of *Gilbert Bourne* (nephew of the outrageous Knight of *Holt* Caſtle and *Battenhall*, above-named), who was made one of the firſt Prebendaries of *Worceſter* in 1541. As he was preaching at St. *Paul's* in 1553, happening to obſerve that Biſhop *Bonner* was unjuſtly deprived, ſome of his audience became ſo offended that one of them fired a piſtol at him, and another threw a dagger which ſtuck in the pillar that ſupported the pulpit; thus evincing the popular opinion of the temporiſing policy both of *Bonner* and his advocate.

Elizabeth has been very juſtly accuſed of intol-

erance and perſecution both by Papiſts and Puritans. On the one hand the oath of allegiance to Her Majeſty was made a frightful bugbear, by which was incurred the forfeiture of all benefices and property, and even the puniſhment due to high treaſon was dealt out; while on the other the act of uniformity enforced the uſe of the *Book of Common Prayer*, on pain of perpetual impriſonment and heavy fines for every inſtance of non-attendance at the pariſh church. The "ſcavenger's daughter" plied her hateful trade as buſily as if there had been a Proteſtant inquiſition, bending and compreſſing the bodies of wretched Catholics till blood iſſued from their ears and noſes; iron gauntlets cruſhed their hands, needles were inſerted under their nails, and many a poor recuſant was introduced to the famous hole in the Tower known as "Little eaſe," where it was impoſſible to ſtand, ſit, or lie. But our great maiden Queen is not altogether without excuſe: ſhe was beleaguered on all ſides by powerful and deſigning enemies; and we who ſit in eaſy arm chairs in theſe days of domeſtic peace and quietude know but little of the ſtern neceſſities which rendered ſtrong meaſures eſſential to the policy of thoſe times. *Pius V* had aſſumed to depoſe the Queen, and the Papal excommunication was poſted by ſtealth on the Biſhop of *London's* palace in the very

heart of the metropolis. What with Catholic revolts and Proteſtant nonconformity---with rumours of plots and apprehenſions from Jeſuits---with the efforts made by *Spain* and other Catholic powers to coerce this kingdom in the matter of its religion---*Elizabeth's* bed was not one of roſes. Pope *Clement* uſed to vent his humour on Her Majeſty by calling her "an old woman without a huſband and without a certain ſucceſſor." His Holineſs might have been a little leſs bitter: *Elizabeth's* ſympathies were with Catholiciſm, but, true to her father's blood, ſhe could not tolerate a foreign Pope---at leaſt ſhe knew the nation would not again ſubmit to the yoke, and that her crown depended on her decided and vigorous ſupport of the cauſe of the Reformation. She tortured Catholics not ſo much for religion's ſake as on political grounds; and although the ſoundneſs of this policy may now be generally queſtioned---eſpecially as the bulk of the *Engliſh* Catholics repudiated the Pope's bull---it muſt be borne in mind that the age of *Elizabeth* had not arrived at a clear perception of the principles of conſtitutional liberty and religious toleration, while the nation had too much to dread from the ſtruggles and inſidious efforts of a powerful though fallen hierarchy to ceaſe for one moment from the moſt jealous watchfulneſs and repreſſive if not exter-

minating meaſures. One of the greateſt objections to Catholicity was the Papal aſſumption of temporal power---an objection in which many influential *Engliſh* Catholics of that day ſeemingly concurred; and but for this development of the Papacy it is poſſible that even now the Weſtern Church might have been undivided, though reformed.

In the month of May, 1559, maſs was entirely aboliſhed and images were generally deſtroyed. In the county of *Worceſter*, I believe, only two ſculptured figures now remain attached to churches, the ſurvivors of the iconoclaſtic outbreak of that time---namely, at *Leigh* and *Rouſelench*. All the Biſhops, except *Anthony* of *Llandaff*, refuſed to take the oath of ſupremacy, and notwithſtanding the vigilance with which the ports were guarded three of them eſcaped to the Continent, among them being Biſhop *Richard Pate* of *Worceſter*, who was ſucceeded by *Edward Sandys*. The parochial clergy, however, did not generally follow the example of their biſhops, for out of 9,400 preferments, only 80 pariſh prieſts, 50 prebendaries, 15 heads of colleges, 12 archdeacons, 12 deans, 6 abbots, and the biſhops, reſigned their places; and of theſe ſelf-denying few, I believe not one was an incumbent of any *Worceſter* city pariſh, *Naſh's* liſts giving no preſentation to any living in this city in 1559. The Catholic body

now generally relinquiſhed their old churches. For about fifteen years they had ſubmitted to the Proteſtant laws of *Elizabeth*, and had attended the pariſh churches, under the idea that they had done quite enough if, in going and returning, they kept together and avoided the ſociety of the Proteſtants. But now, a council declared the attendance at Proteſtant worſhip to be grievouſly ſinful, and the payment of fines for abſence from church was conſidered by far the leſſer evil of the two. *Elizabeth* herſelf is ſaid to have received 20,000*l.* a year from rich Catholics for diſpenſations not to attend Proteſtant worſhip; and although this is an allegation made by her enemies, Her Majeſty's inherent and incurable acquiſitiveneſs renders the truth of the charge not improbable.

The *Engliſh* miſſion of Jeſuits was founded by Father *Perſons* in 1572, and in the midland diſtrict the miſſioners laboured devotedly, but under great difficulties and in conſtant diſguiſes. Then the proceedings againſt Catholics became more rigorous, prieſts being everywhere hunted up, impriſoned, expatriated, or executed; the rack and the gibbet groaned and creaked; every Catholic prieſt was ordered to quit the kingdom within forty days on pain of death, and thoſe who gave aid or ſupport to them were alſo condemned to death, juſt as if guilty of theft or murder. Par-

liament likewiſe granted power to Her Majeſty to deſtroy all prieſts who, being exiled, ſhould return to *England*, or who ſhould dare to enter her dominions, ſuch an act being declared high treaſon. Nevertheleſs, the laws neither prevented prieſts from entering *England* nor the people from receiving and helping them. The ſufferings which reſulted herefrom may be gathered from the State trials, from documents ſtill preſerved at *Douay*, *Stoneyhurſt*, &c., as alſo from the writings of Biſhop *Challoner*, Canon *Flanaghan*, and others. Of courſe at that time there was no public place of worſhip for the Catholics either at *Worceſter* or any other town in the kingdom, although the *Engliſh* miſſion had been conſolidated in 1598 and the kingdom divided into twelve circuits, with a head prieſt and chapter of twelve aſſiſtants. In private houſes the rites of the *Romiſh* faith were ſtill celebrated; great care, however, was taken neither to admit many perſons at the ſame moment nor to make the temporary chapel or abode of the prieſt too conſpicuous; for the prieſt, hiding holes were prepared in gentlemen's houſes, of which numerous ſpecimens ſtill exiſt, as at *Coughton*, &c., while the place aſſigned for the maſs was uſually an obſcure room or garret, whither no one unobſerved could go. This precaution was very neceſſary, for prieſt hunters abounded who la-

boured hard in their office in conſequence of the reward of 100*l.* offered to every one who ſhould convict a perſon of being a prieſt. This grant was allowed as late even as 1778, and there are perſons ſtill living who diſtinctly remember going ſtealthily to their garrets to hear maſs. Ordinarily the prieſt had a home in ſome nobleman's family, but did not remain long in one place, removing from one Catholic houſe to another, and from one county or diſtrict to another, in various diſguiſes and under feigned names, encouraging his brethren in their day of trial and perſecution. At *Oxford*, in 1577, one *Roland Jenks*, a Catholic bookſeller, was condemned at the aſſizes to have his ears nailed to the pillory and to deliver himſelf when he felt inclined by tearing them off with his own hands; but no ſooner was the ſentence paſſed than the judge, magiſtrates, jury, and hundreds of others preſent, were ſtruck with a ſtrange mortal diſtemper, which carried off many inſtantly on the ſpot and others ſoon afterwards. The Catholic chroniclers uſe this hiſtorical fact as a divine interpoſition in their favour, while others have ſeen in it only the neceſſary reſult of a neglect of ſanitary precautions, combined with the extreme heat of the weather, the crowded ſtate of the court, and the filthy condition of the priſoners.

The practice at that time was, when a prieſt

was caught, to hang him, cut him down while alive, embowel and quarter the carcaſe, and put up the four quarters on the gates or entrances to the town :

> " Indeed 'tis true, and yet 'tis wondrous odd,
> To hate each other for the love of God."

Before *Elizabeth's* death, ſo long as there was a doubt of the ſucceſſion, *James* was laviſh of promiſes to all parties, and among the reſt to the afflicted Catholics ; but when he aſcended the throne, and petitions were preſented to him in favour of toleration, he diſappointed both Puritans and Catholics, without earning the reſpect of the Eſtabliſhed Church. Plots were then again rife, and the laws of *Elizabeth* were reimpoſed with great rigour. In *Herefordſhire* eſpecially it is ſtated that 409 families were ſtripped of everything in a very ſhort time ; and at *Warwick*, *John Sugar* was executed for being a ſeminary prieſt. He was famous for his love of the poor, and had travelled on foot over a great part of *Worceſterſhire* and the adjoining counties. *Hindlip* Houſe, near *Worceſter*, was at an early period of the perſecution the great centre of Catholicity in this diſtrict, whither high and low repaired, as is deſcribed by *Juvency*, in his *Hiſtoria Societatis Jeſu*. This ancient manſion (ſee frontiſpiece) was then the reſidence of Mr. *Habingdon ;* and if

in one retreat more than another great pains had been taken to afford ſhelter and ſafety to the hunted prieſts it was here. Mr. *Habingdon's* prieſt, *Edward Oldcorn* (a native of *York*), who had been ſtationed at *Hindlip* by his ſuperior, *Garnett*, was long known as "the apoſtle of *Worceſterſhire*." His labours in this and the adjoining counties---the dangers he was expoſed to and his miraculous eſcapes---are deſcribed as having been inconceivable. *Oliver*, in his *Collections*, ſays "It would require a volume to inſert the good deeds of this virtuous, wiſe, and charitable father and indefatigable miſſioner---the number of perſons whom he converted and of Catholics he reclaimed---of ſcholars whom he ſent over to the ſeminaries, and of devout females to the convents." Father *Gerard* ſays, "Indeed I may ſafely ſay of him, without amplification, that *in illis partibus totas fere fundavit, rexitque eccleſias domeſticas*. I neither do know nor have known any one prieſt in *England* that did go ſo many journeys as he did, eſpecially towards the latter end of his time, when he grew to be acquainted with ſo many places that he could never almoſt ſtay three days at home but he ſhould be ſent for." *Thomas Liſter*, another Jeſuit, alſo reſided at *Hindlip* with *Oldcorn*, as ſtated in *Gerard's* MS.: "*Habebat autem ſocium inſignem et doctum patrem Thomam Liſterum.*" Here alſo was *Ralph*

Aſhley (alias Chambers), a lay brother and the attached ſervant of *Oldcorn*.

The circumſtances of the Gunpowder Plot are no doubt well known to my readers, and the connection therewith of ſeveral *Worceſterſhire* families---*Winter* of *Huddington*, *Lyttelton* of *Hagley*, and *Habingdon* of *Hindlip*. *Cateſby* and *Percy*, the principal conſpirators, with their followers, took ſhelter in a houſe of *Lyttelton's* at *Holbeach*, but being attacked by the High Sheriff of *Worceſterſhire*, were ſlain with ſome others, and the reſt ultimately taken---*Winter* at *Hagley*, and *Lyttelton* at *Preſtwood*. *Garnett*, ſuſpected of having been privy to the plot, was fain to ſeek concealment; and being invited to *Hindlip* by *Oldcorn*, he took ſhelter there. But *Lyttelton*, who was tried at *Worceſter*, and condemned for treaſon becauſe he had received *Winter* into his houſe, gave information (with the view of obtaining a pardon for himſelf) of the hiding places of the two Jeſuits and their followers at *Hindlip*. The circumſtances of the retreat, the ſearch, capture, and ſubſequent treatment of theſe men, muſt now be given in a manner probably new to my readers, who have been accuſtomed to view this matter entirely from a Proteſtant point of view. Let us hear what Father *Juvency* has to ſay on this ſubject, premiſing that my extract is a liberal tranſlation from the *Latin:*

"Being thus ejected from the ſtation which he had long occupied, he *(Garnett)* was invited by *Oldcorn* to the houſe of the *Habingdons*, where *Oldcorn* himſelf had lived a long time. The houſe or caſtle was a large one, ſituated at about the third mile ſtone from *Worceſter*, and was called *Henlip;* it had various parts connected together by paſſages, ſo that you might call it a labyrinth; and when the examiners came to find out prieſts they went away, tired out by the inextricable mazes of the receſſes or hiding places. In this caſtle, as in a ſtrong citadel, *Oldcorn* preſerved the Catholic religion for ſixteen years, and they uſed commonly to call him *Hall*, under which name, as if a kinſman of *Habingdon's*, he was known and beloved not only by Catholics but alſo by the very heretics themſelves, on account of his very bland manners; and hither from the whole province congregated for the ſake of piety the Catholic nobility, who uſed to join *Oldcorn* in the ſacraments and other ordinances of the church. There often, with others, had been *Humphrey Littleton*, who was detected in having received the conſpirators (who ſoon after the conſpiracy had fled from the city) into his own houſe. Having been thrown into priſon on that account, and ſentenced to death, he unhappily thought it might procure his pardon if he indicated the hiding place of the fathers. Accordingly he named the houſe of Mr. *Habingdon*, where he divulged that *Garnett* was living with *Oldcorn*.

"Exulting in an incredible manner at this information, *H. Bromley*---by far the moſt impure of the Puritans---flies off with 200 horſemen, having

been ſet over this buſineſs by Parliament, and with the hope of graſping his *(Habingdon's)* eſtate, which was contiguous to his own. He ſurrounds the caſtle with part of his attendants, ſome of whom he leads to the gates, which not being opened as ſoon as uſual on ſuch occaſions, he breaks down the door, and paſſing through the breach he receives the keys of the houſe, and garriſons every part, juſt as in a ſurrendered city. Having examined every part of it for eight days, but being unable by any art to find out the blind entrances and the hiding places, he determined at laſt to keep a watch until hunger ſhould wear out thoſe who were concealed, and force them to ſurrender. Nor was ſucceſs wanting to his deſign, for two men ſervants (*Owen* and *Aſhley*) almoſt dead with hunger* and deſirous to conſult the intereſt of the fathers, who they ſaw would periſh in a ſhort time for want of food, emerged from their retreat, and being immediately ſeized, they repreſented themſelves as being *Oldcorn* and *Garnett*, expecting to be at once carried off---in which caſe the fathers could have eſcaped---but a light having been brought, and they being cloſely inſpected, and perſons being called who knew both the prieſts, the fraud was detected, and the ſearch was renewed. Some days were conſumed in overhauling the walls, in breaking the floors and wainſcots, and opening the ceilings. At length they found their prey in a receſs in the

* The two ſervants had but one apple to ſubſiſt upon for three days; the two fathers had been maintained by means of a quill or reed paſſed through a hole into the gentlewomen's chamber, by which broths and ſoups were ſucked in.

upper ceiling, which had been elegantly painted over, and the diſcovery well repaid the labour. Shouts followed the ſucceſsful diſcovery, and a freſh party having come from *London*, *Garnett* and *Oldcorn* were carried back in triumph in the midſt of them, although it was in reality a triumph of patience, moderation, and charity---through the odour of which virtues, by degrees *Bromley* (and others who had joined themſelves as companions to *Bromley* for the ſake of honour) began to ſpeak highly of *Garnett*, eſpecially of his doctrine, piety, and moderation.

"Three days after, when firſt brought out of priſon, they followed him with an unuſual demonſtration of honour, and the judges were ſo ſoftened by his firſt anſwers that one of them did not heſitate to ſay openly there could be nothing in the character and cauſe of ſo excellent a man, except his Papiſtical doctrine, that he *(Garnett)* ſhould dread ſeverity in his judgment. But a method and a colour of accuſation was to be ſought which was to deſtroy *Garnett* in the name of a conſpiracy. This pretext was not found till after four months.

"The cauſe of *Oldcorn* was decided firſt, and three things were objected againſt him, firſt, that he had invited *Garnett* to *Henlip*; ſecond, that he had recommended by letter to Father *Jones* to hide two of the conſpirators; and third, that he had appeared to approve of the conſpiracy by his anſwers. One witneſs *(H. Littleton)* was induced to accuſe him, in the hope of obtaining a pardon for himſelf. *Oldcorn* admitted that he had invited *Garnett* to a hiding place at *Henlip*, but that was before it had been forbidden

by edict; as to the ſecond charge, he denied having written letters to *Jones;* and on the third, he admitted having ſpoken to *Littleton* about the conſpiracy, but not approving of it. Theſe anſwers did not ſatisfy the judges, who in vain endeavoured by torture to draw out further admiſſions, and at length they declared that ſo far as he had ſpoken out he appeared to be innocent, but by what he had concealed in his mind he was guilty! * * *

"The conſpirators were ſo worn out by torture that they could ſcarcely advance a ſtep. *Oldcorn* himſelf, who ſhould have been treated more mildly, as being only ſuſpected by the lighteſt conjecture, in the hearing of all the people affirmed that he was five times tortured, and once for five hours ſo dreadfully that his mind and almoſt his life failed him. To which atteſtation none of the judges preſent oppoſed anything, or it would have been abundantly refuted by the ſilent aſpect of *Oldcorn* himſelf; his looſened arms and hands ſufficiently confirmed this impious cruelty. In conſequence of this he was unable to ſubſcribe his name to the ſavage ſentence, and the officer of the court inſerted the pen between his deadened fingers, drew his languid hand, and marked out ſome ſtraggling words. The judges ſeemed now deterred by ſhame, and ſeveral *London* lawyers argued againſt the iniquity of the proceedings. *Oldcorn* was then removed to *Worceſter*, ſo that he might periſh more obſcurely. *Habingdon* and *Winter* were alſo led with him, and *Littleton* was ſentenced to die with them. When he ſaw that he had been deceived with the hope of life he openly confeſſed his treaſon,

and declared that he died deſervedly becauſe he had been the means of putting *Oldcorn* and *Garnett* to death, and from *Oldcorn* he ſupplicated pardon for his falſehood, publicly deteſting his perfidy. Not only this penitence of a Catholic man affected *Oldcorn* with great comfort, but alſo the ſudden converſion of a Calviniſtic young man (almoſt loſt) who came over to the better part; for the latter, being in the ſame priſon with *Oldcorn*, and being about to ſuffer the puniſhment due to his wickedneſs the day after, relying on the vain doctrine of *Calvin*---that faith in *Chriſt* alone expunged all our ſins, ſo that we need not fear danger or deſtruction after death---relying on that vain faith, the young man laughed at the Catholics piouſly preparing themſelves for death, while he kept dancing and ſinging all night. But *Oldcorn* addreſſing himſelf to him in his bland manner, after earneſt prayers to *God*, taught him good things, and brought him to a deteſtation of his wickedneſs; he was reconciled to the church, caſt away his errors, and took the benefit of confeſſion.

"Joyful in this victory, *Oldcorn* proceeded to the ſcene of puniſhment, or rather of glory, on the 7th of April; and when he came within ſight of the people, with a loud voice he called *God* to witneſs that death was brought on him for two reaſons, firſt, becauſe he had exerciſed the office of a prieſt; and ſecond, becauſe he had received *Garnett*, although he had not then been proſcribed by edict. Being then interrogated by the magiſtrate why he was ſilent about the third and principal charge, namely the conſpiracy, he replied that this charge could not pertain to

him as he had never said or done anything in conſequence of which he ſhould be conſidered deſervedly guilty of the conſpiracy. After theſe things, having piouſly called on *God*, he gave himſelf up to the hangman, by whom he was ſuſpended and cut open; his heart and inteſtines, according to cuſtom, were thrown into the fire, and from the place where his remains were buried flames broke out for ſixteen days, which a copious rain was not able to extinguiſh. *Worceſter* ran together as if to a portent; and the magiſtrate, ſeeing his own iniquity ſhine out by the flames, did not ceaſe till he had entirely covered them with mould after the faſhion of a mountain.* But he did not on that account ſucceed in burying the memory of this excellent man. Indeed *Worceſter* uſed to look upon him as her own apoſtle. To him, as to an oracle, all Catholics uſed to apply, by whoſe wiſdom they might be ruled, and by whoſe charity they might be cheriſhed. Both laymen and prieſts, toſſed about by the wild waves of that troublous time, uſed to come together to the houſe of *Habingdon* as to a ſafe harbour. He added many to the Catholic ranks, and ſaved from hereſy *Dorothy*, the ſiſter of *Habingdon*. Scarcely anything ſhows more clearly either the admirable power of grace or the excellence of *Oldcorn* than the converſion of this lady. She had grown up in the court of *Elizabeth*, almoſt in the boſom of hereſy, nor did ſhe merely oppoſe the Catholic diſputants pertinaciouſly after the manner of women, but as was thought ſhe anſwered ſagaciouſly and very

* The bailiffs for *Worceſter* in 1605-6 were *Thomas Cheric* and *Edward Mitton*.

theologically. *Oldcorn* ſeemed a moſt ſuitable man either to oppoſe the female ſpirit by his erudition or ſoften it by his politeneſs and poliſhed manner. His firſt labour was in vain: if ſhe found herſelf unable to repel the weapons of reaſon by force ſhe eluded them by craft, and broke them by a perſiſtency always unconquered, being indeed aſhamed to confeſs herſelf overcome. What could *Oldcorn* do? The voice of *Chriſt* ſpeaking came to his mind, that this was a certain kind of demon, which could not be driven out of her except by prayer and faſting. The diſputation being left off, he engages in prayer and preſerved a four days' faſt. For the firſt two days, *Dorothy*, wondering that he did not eat, ſuſpected that he was very ill, and finding that he abſtained from all food for a third and even a fourth day, ſhe inquired the cauſe. This being made known to her, looking at the great charity of the man, and being moved by Divine inſpiration, ſhe threw herſelf at his feet: being before arrogantly pretentious, ſhe is now modeſt and humble; from being a miſtreſs of error, ſhe is now a diſciple of the truth.

"*Oldcorn* had been at *Henlip* for ſixteen years, being often protected by the manifeſt interpoſition of *God* from plots to diſcover him. On one occaſion, *Bromley*, being informed that he was within, came quietly with a body of men, and having ſcaled the wall, deſcended into the garden where *Oldcorn* was by chance taking his exerciſe. The party civilly ſaluted him (not knowing it was *Oldcorn*) and paſſed by, when he immediately ſlipped away into his hiding place. Having made a long and fruitleſs ſearch, a ſuſpicion

croſſed their minds that he was the very man of whom they were in ſearch, but running back, they found he was gone; and their belief that he had eſcaped by flight was confirmed on finding that a horſe which they had at firſt ſeen in the ſtable had alſo diſappeared. Being uncertain which way he had fled, they at that time abandoned the ſearch. A horſe was afterwards found feeding in a neighbouring meadow, but no one could aſcertain by whom it had been led there or by which gate it had gone out. The ſearchers, however, did not ſo ſoon go away, for they were ſatisfied by certain proofs that *Oldcorn* was lying hid there; ſo they ſurrounded the houſe with a circle of men, and for three days and nights tore the walls to pieces, digging through in more than twenty places. At laſt they came to a wall in which he was hidden; they beat the ſtones one by one with hammers, partly to move them and partly to try the ſound, for if a harſh or dull ſound was returned it would give proof of ſome hollow. At each of the blows, *Oldcorn* made the ſign of the croſs, by which the ſtones were ſo guarded as to give back only a ſolid and clear ſound, ſeeming harder than adamant. The ſearch was, therefore, abandoned, and the men went away tired. Nor did the powers above take leſs care of *Oldcorn* when he was induced to wander out of that caſtle whither the ſalvation of ſouls invited him. Having with ſome companions entered on a journey by night he was ſeized by a troop of watchmen and carried before a neighbouring juſtice, by whom he is aſked who he is, and why travelling in thoſe parts at that unſeaſonable time. But behold

there ſuddenly ſtood by him an old man unknown, who pleaded for him in ſo appoſite an oration that he quite ſatisfied the juſtice. He is, therefore, diſmiſſed with the appearance of honour, without having his baggage examined, in which, if the furniture of ſacred ſervice and the books of a prieſt had been found, he could not have eſcaped being diſcovered and condemned without delay.

"In this manner the powers above, being preſent, guarded his life, as before that they had taken care of his health by a ſingular benefit; for when he was conſtantly emaciating himſelf by voluntary penances --- in which thing holy perſons ſcarce keep ſafe bounds --- having burſt a vein in his cheſt, he poured out a great quantity of blood, ſo that he often lay deſtitute of ſtrength and half dead. In addition to this there was a putrid ulcer in his mouth, and an incurable cancer. He, however, undertook a pilgrimage to St. *Winifred's* ſhrine, which is ſituated in *Wales*, and returned free from both diſeaſes."

Challoner ſtates that *Oldcorn*, on his way to the well, lodged at a Catholic houſe, and was told by the prieſt of the family that a ſtone which had been taken out of the aforeſaid well was kept in the houſe. *Oldcorn*, after the maſs, applied this ſtone to his mouth, devoutly recommending himſelf to the prayers of St. *Winifred*, and in half an hour was perfectly cured of his cancer. St. *Winifred's* well was in great eſteem among the *Worceſterſhire* Catholics. Jeſuit *Owen* reports

the cure of *Roger Whetſton*, then about ſixty years of age, of an inveterate lameneſs by drinking the water of this well, on 28th Auguſt, 1667. This poor man came from *Bromſgrove*, and from having been a "Quaker and Anabaptiſt" is ſaid to have become a ſerious Catholic, and his ſon, then about eleven years of age, was chriſtened *Catholico more*, unto whom the greateſt perſons in the country were pleaſed to be patrines."

For the extraordinary circumſtances attending the execution of *Oldcorn* I have conſulted *More's Hiſtory of the Anglican Miſſion*, of whoſe narrative the following is a rough tranſlation:

"*Oldcorn* being ſent back to *Worceſter*, to await the ſentence of the accuſtomed local tribunals, he was there ſhut up in cuſtody with common malefactors, and the day before he was led to his trial he had a companion in his chains, namely, a very wicked robber, charged with many crimes; who, although he was to meet his puniſhment the day after, ſeemed free from care, and wandered about the priſon leiſurely employing himſelf in dancing, ſinging, and jokes, ſometimes addreſſing one and then another with his facetiæ, and rallying Father *Oldcorn* on the ſuperfluous anxiety which ſeemed to be conſuming him before the time. The father, prudently thinking that the ſalvation of his companion was rather to be conſidered than his own continued communication with *God*, addreſſed the man, and aſked wherein was the ground or cauſe of his truſt. If he felt no fear as to the next world,

becauſe he thought there was nothing there either to be feared or hoped for, ſuch a ſentiment was unworthy of a Chriſtian; but if he feared not on account of the merits of *Chriſt*, which are our only ground of truſt, he ought to remember that not faith only but good works were required of us by *Chriſt*. The moſt certain way to confidence was this: to unite to the merits of *Chriſt* our obedience to his precepts. The robber (after more argument of this kind) entirely and thoughtfully delivered himſelf up to the inſtructor; the reſt of the day was ſpent in inſtruction and the night in confeſſion. The next day, when both were being led to the place of execution, this man, ſeparating himſelf from the other convicts, followed behind the hurdle on which the father was being dragged through kennels filthy with mire. Being aſked why he did ſo, he ſaid, 'I follow my father, who ſhowed me the way of ſalvation, for in the faith which he profeſſes I have determined to die.' 'Are you' (they ſay) 'a Papiſt rogue?' Said he, 'I was a thief, I confeſs, and a robber, while I was yours; but now, by the mercy of *God* and the aſſiſtance of this man, I have become a Catholic, and am doing the penance of ſinners with a firm hope of eternal life.'

"In one day, therefore, three were carried off by a ſimilar puniſhment---being partners in one faith and one reward---namely, *Oldcorn*, and the robber, and *Rodolph (Aſhley)*, the ſervant of *Oldcorn*. This man and *John Owen* (whom we have mentioned), on the tenth day after they had hidden themſelves, came out, either forced by want of food or induced by hope (as ſometimes

happens) that they would be ſeized in miſtake for the prieſts; but *Garnett* was too well known for the obſervers to be deceived by the appearance of another. Therefore *Rodolph* was puniſhed ſimply for having been the ſervant of a prieſt. As ſoon as *Oldcorn* reached the firſt ſtep of the ladder on which he was mounting, *Rodolph* coming up impreſſed a kiſs on the footſtep, ſaying, 'O happy man that I am, who have been given as ſervant to this ſaint, and by him brought to live well, and now about to make an end of life by ſo bleſſed a death.' ('He met his death,' ſays *Oliver*, 'with the tranquillity and fortitude becoming the diſciple of ſuch a friend and father.') The body of *Oldcorn* having been cut into four parts, the bowels were thrown into a ditch, and are ſaid to have burnt with fire for ſixteen days---about the ſame number as the years in which he, while living, had ſtriven to communicate the Divine fire to the minds of the men of that region. This is conſidered to have been a prodigy, eſpecially as a copious rain had fallen during that time. On the ſeventeenth day the people collecting from the neighbouring places much earth was thrown on the flames, which were with difficulty extinguiſhed.

"And another thing is related to illuſtrate the memory of both (*Oldcorn* and *Garnett*). There is before the houſe of *Habingdon* a large court, bounded by a wall; there, after the two captives had been led out and mounted on horſeback, their laſt footſtep appeared clothed with a new kind of graſs, ſuch as had never been ſeen by any one before that day---and not riſing up confuſedly and without order, but which imitated the figure

of an imperial crown, the herbage coming together in a heap; and although the doors had been thrown down by the force and preſſure of the party firſt ruſhing in, whereby there lay open an acceſs for animals of any kind, while they fed on the reſt they uſed to leave that untouched. Theſe may be conſidered trifling circumſtances, and capable of various interpretations, yet *God* not unfrequently ſpeaks by trifling things of this kind, in the ſame manner as by the ivy of *Iona* and the unfruitful fig-tree, and thus calls us to higher things. And as the diſciples and others variouſly interpreted the parables ſpoken by *Chriſt*, ſo if any one think that the innocence of theſe men and their holineſs of life is confirmed by theſe proofs he is by no means to be oppoſed, ſince he does not depart from the cuſtom of *Chriſt* and his diſciples in parables."

Challoner gives further particulars of *Oldcorn's* trial and execution, from which it appears that the trial took place at *Worceſter* Lenten Aſſize, and the execution on April 7th, 1606, being the Monday in Paſſion Week, at Red Hill, near *Worceſter*, on the *London* Road. He was hung, cut down, and butchered alive at the age of forty-five; his head and quarters were ſet upon poles in different parts of the city, and his heart and bowels caſt into the fire, which (*Challoner* adds) continued to ſend forth a lively flame for ſixteen days. A ſonnet was compoſed on this execution, of which the following is a ſample:

"Few words he ſpoke; they ſtopped his mouth,
And choked him with a cord;
And leſt he ſhould be dead too ſoon,
No mercy they afford;
But quick and live they cut him down,
And butcher him full ſoon,
Behead, tear, and diſmember ſtraight,
And laugh when all was done."

Oliver remarks ---

"I hope in *God* the time will come when the city of *Worceſter* ſhall ſee and acknowledge both the burning charity with which Father *Oldcorn* lived and died among them, and the crown of glory he hath received of the hand of *God* for his faith ſo truly kept and his courſe ſo happily conſummated. His life was holy, his death ſaintly. *God* ſend us part of his bleſſed merits and interceſſion."

Littleton was alſo executed at the ſame time, together with *John Winter*, *Perks* of *Hagley*, and *Burford* his man, for receiving and entertaining *Robert Winter* and *S. Littleton* at the time of their flight, contrary to the King's proclamation. *Garnett* met his fate in St. *Paul's* Churchyard, *London*, on the 3rd of May, 1606; and the Catholic hiſtorians declare that ſome drops of blood falling from his head on a ſtalk of ſtraw arranged themſelves into a minute but diſtinct reſemblance of Father *Garnett*, the features, beard, and neck, being all exactly formed to his likeneſs. This ſtraw was ſaid to have been at *Stoneyhurſt* College for years, and Father *Richard*

Blount avouches the truth of the tale, "for," ſays he, "beſides ourſelves, a thouſand others are witneſſes of it."* Moreover, *Garnett's* head being placed on *London* Bridge, is ſaid to have "retained the ſame lively colour for which it had been conſpicuous during life for about twenty days, which drew all *London* to the ſpectacle." The ſervant man *Owen*, above mentioned, had alſo an *alias*, namely "Little *John*," and is ſaid to have poſſeſſed wonderful ingenuity in contriving ſecret places for prieſts to hide in, beſides extraordinary diſcretion and judgment, ſo that he maintained the unbounded eſteem and confidence of the Catholic clergy and gentry; he was put on the rack for ſeven hours together in the Tower of *London*, but never divulged his ſecrets; and they tortured him "till his bowels and his life guſhed out together."

My readers may attach what weight they chooſe to the above-mentioned evidence of miracles, by which the eccleſiaſtics of thoſe days

* In a tract called *The Fiery Trial*, publiſhed in *London*, 1612, the author, in an account of Popiſh miracles, ſays, "Adde hereto alſo their late coyned woonder of *Garnet's* face in a wheat ſtrawe: *vide librum cuius tituli pars eſt, vera hiſtoria de admirabili ſpica.* Rightly Engliſhed---

"'A fabulous ſtory of a fained ſtraw
Firſt divulged by a fooliſh jack-dawe.'"

For a copy of the above, with many other ſcarce and valuable works, now in the *Worceſter* Cathedral Library, I am indebted to the kindneſs of the Very Rev. the Dean.

maintained their hold upon the ſuperſtitious maſſes; but it ſhould be borne in mind that the works from which I have quoted were publiſhed at a ſufficient diſtance from the ſcene of ſupernatural appearances, and in a language unknown to the maſs of the people, ſo that no fear could be apprehended of an examination into or contradiction of the alleged facts. The remembrance of the Gunpowder Plot was long kept up in *Worceſterſhire* with probably greater animus againſt Popery than in moſt other counties, owing to the local incidents which have been already detailed. On every recurring 5th of November the *Worceſter* Corporation provided fuel for the bonfires and drink for the happy ſpectators, who paraded their "*Guy*" and committed him to the flames with that intenſe ſatisfaction which uſually accompanies an act of religious patriotiſm. The wood and thatch of thoſe days, however, did not ſuit the development of bonfires, and after many ruinous conflagrations had occured in the city, this popular demonſtration againſt Popery was cried down in 1789, but ſtill lingers amongſt us in the ſhape of an occaſional ſquib or a cracker diſcharged by ſome enterpriſing youth when P. C. has turned the corner.

Robert North, *alias Duckett*, another Jeſuit, is mentioned by *Gerard*, in his *Latin* Autobiography, as having been a priſoner in *Worceſter*

Gaol when *Oldcorn* was executed; he, however, got free from the toils, and was living at *St. Omer's* in 1609. *John Floyd*, alſo a Jeſuit in the Engliſh miſſion, in attempting to penetrate to *Oldcorn*, while the latter was detained a cloſe priſoner in *Worceſter* Gaol, was apprehended and lay in priſon for a year, when he was ſentenced to perpetual baniſhment. *More* ſays of him---

"*John*, the brother of *Henry Floyd*, learnt by experience that everything is not ſafe which appears ſo, for going to ſee our *Oldcorn* in *Worceſter* Gaol he was detained there, and neither by entreaty nor the offer of a ranſom was he able to obtain his liberation, *Popham* being an obſtacle.* After a year's exile he went to *St. Omer's* and devoted four years to preaching and bringing to light the various errors of the heretics, with great applauſe both for ingenuity and doctrine. Then returning to *England*, he was often bought off from the purſuivants, and at length emigrated to *Louvain*."

In Father *Perſons's Judgment of a Catholic Engliſhman*, publiſhed in 1608, he ſays that "no night paſſed comonly but that ſoldiours and

* *Popham* was Attorney General in 1582-3, and Chief Juſtice in 1601; and concerning him and others, whoſe families were enriched by abbey lands, in "the weſt countrie," the old couplet may here be quoted:

> "*Popham*, *Horner*, and *Thynne*,
> When the monks popped out they popp'd in."

catchpoles brake into quiet men's houſes when they were aſleep, and not onlye carryed awaye their perſons into priſons, at their pleaſure, except they would brybe themſelves exceſſively, but whatever lyked them beſt beſydes in the houſe, eyther of bookes, cuppes, chalyces, or other furniture that might anywayes ſeeme or be apprehended to belong to religion, was taken for a prey and ſeized on;" and he mentions a Mrs. *Shelley*, "a gentlewoman of good worſhippe, being caſte into the common jayle at *Worceſter*, for that the prieſt, *M. Haſſells*, was found in her houſe."

Churchwardens and conſtables were now ordered to preſent, at Seſſions once a year, the names of all Catholics, their children and ſervants; and any Catholic once convicted of not attending the pariſh church was to forfeit 20*l.* a month for his whole life, and the King was empowered to ſeize two-thirds of his property; every Catholic was alſo forbidden to go more than five miles from his houſe without permiſſion of a Juſtice or a Biſhop. The oath of allegiance and ſupremacy was tendered to all ſuſpected reſidents and travellers, and if they refuſed to take it the conſequence was impriſonment and præmunire. One ray of ſunſhine was ſhed on the poor Catholics when *James* was endeavouring to ſecure for his ſon *Charles* the hand of the *Spanish*

Infanta, the *Spaniards* demanding as a proviſo to the marriage that the penal laws ſhould not be enforced; but when the match was broken off, the laws were again let looſe. *Charles*, however, married another Catholic lady---*Henrietta* of *France*, and then as much toleration as the *Engliſh* Parliament and people would permit was allowed. At that time there were five Jeſuit miſſioners in the *Worceſterſhire* diſtrict.

In 1622, Father *Blount*, then Vice-Provincial, erected Jeſuits' Colleges in *England*, including, ſoon after, that of *St George's* for *Worceſter* and *Warwick*. In 1623, *England* was erected into a province, and Father *Blount* was appointed Firſt Provincial. *Worceſter*, I believe, was called a "reſidence," being a ſtation over which there was no ſuperior, the miſſioner at a reſidence differing in this reſpect from the miſſioner at a college, who had a local ſuperior. Theſe reſidences had not neceſſarily the means of ſupport within themſelves, but their independence of a local rector was the great diſtinction of, and gave importance to, the reſidence.

Father *Anderſon* (from *Norfolk*) laboured in this miſſion with great ſucceſs, and was inſtrumental in the converſion of the daughter of the Biſhop of *Worceſter*,* about the year 1630.

* Biſhop *John Thornborough*, who is deſcribed as an accompliſhed man, and a writer on the philoſopher's ſtone.

More, in his *Latin* hiſtory previouſly quoted, gives an intereſting account of the circumſtances of this Biſhop's family:

"The then falſe Biſhop of *Worceſter* had a large offspring, which he had taken care to bring up diligently from their cradles in the same hereſy as himſelf; but indeed by the goodneſs of *God*, one of his daughters having embraced the Catholic faith, was an example to many of piety and conſtancy. Her eldeſt brother---a man immerſed in the filth of all wickedneſs---had come to extremities, from the effects of a dangerous diſeaſe; and being touched by either true or feigned religious motives, ſpoke to his ſiſter, who was anxious about his health, and beſought her more than once that ſhe would ſend for a prieſt, he vehemently aſſerting that he deſired to die as a Catholic. Accordingly, leſt ſo neceſſary a thing ſhould be wanting to her brother in his danger, ſhe called one of our prieſts, who having received the confeſſion of a whole life, refreſhed the ſick man with the heavenly bread; a ſecond time he returned to ſtrengthen the neophyte by the ſame ſacraments. He is aſked a third time to come; but in the meantime the unhappy man had diſcovered to his parent what had been going on. A ſnare was laid, and the prieſt (*William Anderſon*), was caught. On being brought before the Biſhop, and an oath which they called the 'oath of fidelity' being refuſed, he was put into cloſe confinement (in a loathſome dungeon). Meanwhile the ſick man, like a wretched deſerter, ſoon ſuffered a moſt unhappy death, being never heard

to name *God* except when he violated that moſt ſacred name by his ſacrilegious oaths, but uſed to cry out that an evil devil was ſtanding by him with horrid form and aſpect, and he alſo heard the prieſt upbraiding him with his wickedneſs and the injury he had done him. The prieſt being removed to *London*, at length by favour of the Queen obtaining his freedom, he ſpent ſome more years in the ſame work, and cloſed his days (1657) at *St. Omer's*, where he had received his early education."

About the year 1630, Father *Edward Siliſdon* aſſiſted in the Catholic miſſion at *Worceſter*. He was born in *Suffolk* in 1594, and became ſuperior of the *Worceſterſhire* miſſion; *obiit* January 3, 1659. There were ſaid to be not leſs than one thouſand miſſionaries in *England* in the year 1634, and as they died their places were readily ſupplied from foreign colleges eſtabliſhed for the purpoſe. In the laſt-named year, *Edward Knott* publiſhed at *St. Omer's* a work entitled *Mercy and Truth, or Charity maintained by Catholics; by way of Reply upon an Anſwer lately framed by Dr. Potter, Dean of Worceſter, to a Treatiſe which had formerly proved that Charity was miſtaken by Proteſtants, with the want whereof Catholics are unjuſtly charged for affirming that Proteſtancy unrepented deſtroys ſalvation.* The national jealouſy againſt Popery was now greatly on the increaſe, and in the *Townſend* MSS. is a parliamentary order,

ſigned, "*Littilton*," *London*, 18th November, 1641, to the following effect:

"To his loving friends, the Sheriff, Deputy-Lieutenants, and Juſtices of the Peace within the County of *Worceſter*: Whereas there hath notice been given to the Parliament that the Popiſh recuſants have appointed a day to aſſemble themſelves, being the 18th day of this inſtant November, within certain counties of this kingdom, whereof your county is one, which may tend to the great diſturbance of the peace of this kingdom, theſe are, therefore, in His Majeſty's name and by authority of Parliament to will and require you, the Sheriffs and Deputy-Lieutenants, Juſtices of the Peace, and all other officers of the ſeveral counties, to look carefully that no ſuch unlawful aſſemblies ſhall be; and to require you to ſuppreſs ſuch aſſemblies or meetings by the force of the countie or otherwiſe, as you will anſwer it to the contrary."

In Auguſt, 1642, the *Worceſter* County Grand Jury made a declaration to defend the Proteſtant religion againſt Popiſh recuſants and others; and in the following month the trained ſoldiers and commoners of the city entreated the mayor and chamber "to take order that no Papiſts or recuſants be ſuffered to take houſes nor be reſident within the city;" in obedience to which requeſt Mr. Mayor granted "that the Lord *Lovelace* and one Mr. *Stanford*, who are by the commons declared to be delinquents and Papiſts, ſhould be

required ſpeedily to depart the city; and if they do not upon ſuch requeſt depart, they ſhall by lawful means be enforced thereunto."

When the Puritans prevailed in Parliament, at the period verging on the Commonwealth, all ſects united in denouncing the Catholics. In 1643, ſequeſtrators were appointed for the ſeveral counties, whoſe duty was, among others, to ſeize and confiſcate two parts out of three of the eſtates of all Papiſts, for the uſe of the Parliament; and the State Paper Office contains ſeveral hundred volumes of names of the ſufferers. Preſbyterian ſervices now ſupplanted thoſe of the Anglican Church, and for ſome years that party ſhared with the Independents and Baptiſts the uſe of our cathedrals and pariſh churches, where their ſermons were regulated by the hour glaſs, relics of which ſtill remain at *Shelſley* and elſewhere in this county. More and more ſevere were now the perſecutions of the Catholics, and intenſe the feeling excited againſt them. Dr. *Prattenton*, in his MS. collections for *Worceſterſhire*, quotes a diary in which it is ſaid that *Charles Price*, who had been an active man in raiſing forces for the King in *Wales*, was ſtabbed at *Worceſter*, January 30, 1645, "for ſhowing ſome diſcontent that Papiſts were received into greateſt favour and Proteſtants thruſt out of office." And in December of the ſame year

a Proteſtant aſſociation which had been formed in the north-weſt part of the county of *Worceſter* among other regulations directed "that in all our meetings and general rendezvous all Papiſts, or other perſons adhering to or holding intelligence with Papiſts, be excluded the field and liſt of our communication; and if they or any of them ſhall offer to intrude on our aſſemblies at ſuch meetings, and after warning given will not ſeverally depart, that then they ſhall be diſarmed, and the arms ſo taken from them ſhall be delivered to the conſtable of each particular pariſh reſpectively where ſuch perſon ſo diſarmed doth dwell, to be kept for His Majeſty's ſervice when occaſion ſhall be to make uſe of them. And no Papiſts, or others holding intelligence with them, to receive the benefit of public protection. All ſoldiers to be firſt billeted at their houſes, and no horſes or teams to be taken till all theirs are gone; and all ſuch perſons are to be impreſſed into His Majeſty's ſervice ſo far as deſirable." *Cromwell* ordered all prieſts to quit the kingdom on pain of death, and all Cavaliers and Catholics were to go twenty miles from the metropolis. The Protector alſo placed over the militia diſtricts officers (Major General *Berry* being aſſigned to the counties of *Worceſter*, *Hereford*, *Salop*, and *North Wales*) who, among other things, were to take care that

Papiſts and disaffected perſons ſhould be deprived of their arms; the principal allegation then made againſt the Catholics being, that they had arrayed themſelves under the unfortunate banner of the miſerable *Stuarts*---an act which was rewarded by the ſecond *Charles*, when he came to the throne, by ordering all Jeſuits and prieſts to quit the kingdom. Nevertheleſs, that notable monarch was wont to ſay that "the only religion for a *gentleman* was Catholiciſm"---an opinion he had probably arrived at from the circumſtance that although he had fallen into the hands of about ninety Catholics in ſucceſſion after his fatal defeat at *Worceſter* he was not betrayed by any one of them; and when the circumſtances of his death are taken into account, it will be readily believed that his lack of toleration for the Catholics was occaſioned more by the "preſſure from without" than by any other cauſe, it ſeeming extremely improbable that he poſſeſſed a true regard for any form of religion, but only that kind of diſtant reſpect for Catholiciſm which ſhould "make his mind eaſy" in his latter moments. The growth of Popery during this reign, however, was ſo apparent, notwithſtanding the great fire of *London* had raiſed a loud outcry againſt Catholics, that the Houſe of Commons, in an addreſs to the throne in 1670, complained among other things that "the Papiſts in *Yorkſhire* com-

monly rang a bell to call the people to maſs." Still no public chapels had yet ventured to make their appearance: the Mitre Tavern at *Oxford*, and private houſes at *Worceſter*, *Wolverhampton*, and other places, were then uſed regularly for maſs; and at the *Coombe*, in *Herefordſhire*, was a fraternity of Popiſh prieſts.

The utmoſt vigilance was, however, uſed at this period by the Proteſtants, both in Church and State, to unmaſk their religious opponents, an inſtance of which is ſhown in the articles of viſitation exhibited to miniſters, churchwardens, &c., in 1662, one of the inquiries put to thoſe officers being the following: "Are there any convicted Papiſts, known Anabaptiſts, Familiſts, Quakers, and other ſeparatiſts, in your pariſh?"

In the year 1678, Father *Beſwick*, *alias Sanders*, was prieſt at *Worceſter*, and after thirty-two years of miſſionary labour he died here in March, 1680, at the age of ſixty-one.

Titus Oates's famous diſcovery of a plot to eſtabliſh the Pope in the government of this country was no doubt an impudent fiction at the expenſe of the Catholics, deſigned to work up the nation into fury. *Oates* himſelf was a ſingular exemplification of the mutability of human fortunes: penſioned by *Charles II* with 1,200*l.* a year, he was impriſoned, whipped, and pilloried by *James*, awarded the more moderate allowance

of 400*l.* per annum by "the deteſtable Dutchman," as *William III* has been denominated, and finally died at an advanced age. His pretended diſcloſures had the effect of hurrying a multitude of Catholics to priſon and the ſcaffold. Prieſts were again executed for the mere fact of being prieſts, as was the caſe with Father *Wall*, a Franciſcan, who was put to death at *Worceſter*, and his body laid in St. *Oſwald's* burying-ground, Auguſt 22, 1679, the ſame day on which Father *Kemble*, or *Campbell*, ſuffered in a ſimilar manner at *Hereford*.

From a narrative written by himſelf, and preſerved among the records of the *Engliſh* Franciſcans at *Douay*, it appears that *John Wall*, alias *Francis Johnſon*, was born of a good family in *Lancaſhire*, in 1620, had a good eſtate of 500*l.* a year, which he abandoned for the ſake of religion; ſtudied at the *Engliſh* College of *Douay*, and at thirty-two years of age took the habit of St. *Francis*. In 1656 he was ſent to the *Engliſh* miſſion, his reſidence being in *Worceſterſhire*, where he was ſometime known by the name of *Webb*, and was eſteemed a laborious miſſioner. He was in *London* when the King's proclamation came forth (after *Titus Oates's* plot), commanding all Catholics to depart from thence by the Friday following; he obeyed, and came to a friend's houſe in *Worceſterſhire*, not intending to ſtay there;

but the King's ſecond proclamation being preſently publiſhed, that no Catholic ſhould walk above five miles without being ſtopped and carried before a Juſtice to have the oaths tendered, he took counſel of both Proteſtants and Catholics, and concluded it wiſer to ſtay. The Sheriff's deputy came to the houſe where he was, with ſix or eight men, to arreſt a gentleman for debt, and not finding him, broke down the doors, and among them the unfortunate prieſt's, before he was out of bed, and by miſtake arreſted him. On being taken before a Juſtice, the wife of the latter had a private interview with the priſoner, uſing her beſt perſuaſion to make him take the oaths; but he, thanking her, ſaid he was not moved by fear or danger. Subſequently he was taken before Sir *John Pakington*, who aſked him who he was, to which he replied that he had been in *Worceſterſhire* for twenty years and was well known; he declined to take the oaths, though he declared that he ever had been and would be a good ſubject. Sir *John Pakington* and Mr. *Townſend* committed him (Dec., 1678) for trial, previous to which he was in *Worceſter* Caſtle (the old gaol) for five months. What he ſuffered here, and with what diſpoſition of mind, may be gathered beſt from his own words:

"Impriſonment (ſays he) in theſe times eſpeci-

ally, when none can ſend to their friends, nor friends come to them, is the beſt means to teach us how to put our confidence in *God* alone in all things; and then He will make His promiſe good, that all things shall be added to us (*Luke* xii); which chapter, if every one would read and make good use of, a priſon would be better than a palace, and a confinement for religion and a good conſcience ſake more pleaſant than all the liberties the world could afford."

He was brought upon his trial at *Worceſter*, April 25, 1679, before Judge *Atkins*, upon an indictment of high treason, for being a prieſt and remaining in this realm contrary to the ſtatute of *Elizabeth* 27. He would neither confeſs nor deny his prieſthood, but defended himſelf very prudently. There was only one witneſs that voluntarily appeared againſt him (*Rogers* by name, who did ſo for lucre ſake, and who ſwore that he had received the ſacrament at the prieſt's hands, although it was ſhown that he had never ſeen the prieſt till the latter was in gaol), and three others that came by compulſion; however, the jury found him guilty of the indictment, and the Judge pronounced ſentence againſt him in the uſual form, as in caſes of high treaſon. Upon which the prieſt made a bow, and ſaid aloud, "Thanks be to *God*; *God* ſave the King; and I beſeech *God* to bleſs your Lordſhip and all this honourable Bench." The Judge replied, "You

have ſpoken very well; I do not intend you ſhall die, at leaſt not for the preſent, until I know the King's further pleaſure." He then continues his narrative:

"After the Judge was gone from the bench, ſeveral Proteſtant gentlemen and others who had heard my trial came to me, though ſtrangers, and told me how ſorry they were for me; to whom with thanks I replied, that I was troubled they ſhould grieve for me or my condition, who was joyful for it myſelf; for I told them I had profeſſed this faith and religion all my lifetime, which I was as ſure to be true as I was ſure of the truth of *God's* word, on which it was grounded, * * * and I was as ready, by *God's* grace, to die to-morrow, as I had been to receive the ſentence of death to-day, and as willingly as if I had a grant of the greateſt dukedom."

Before the Judge left *Worceſter*, a petition was preſented to him from Father *Wall*, acquainting him that he (the priſoner) had had the honour of kiſſing the King's hand before his Reſtoration, when in the Low Countries; and his Majeſty had promiſed him and others that when he was reſtored to the crown they ſhould not live in baniſhment. The Judge promiſed to deliver the petition, but it was thought he never did. Father *Wall* was returned to priſon, and after ſome time was ſent for up to *London*, as were alſo ſeveral other prieſts who were under condemnation.

They were all ſtrictly examined; Father *Wall* was declared by his examiner (Mr. *Bedloe*) to be innocent and free from all plots whatever, and he was told that if he would but comply in matters of religion, for all he was condemned, he ſhould not die. To which the father replied, that he would not buy life at ſo dear a rate as to wrong his conſcience. At length, after four months had paſſed from his condemnation, he was ordered to be executed; and Father *W. Leviſon*, who viſited him in priſon, has given the following account of him in a letter preſerved by the *Engliſh* Franciſcans:

"Of late (ſays he) I was deſired, and willingly went, to viſit our friend Mr. *Webb* (Father *Wall*), priſoner at *Worceſter*, whoſe execution drew near at hand. I came to him two days before it, and found him a cheerful ſufferer of his preſent impriſonment, and raviſhed as it were with joy, with the future hopes of dying for ſo good a cauſe. I found, contrary to both his and my expectation, the favour of being with him alone; and the day before his execution I enjoyed that privilege for the ſpace of four or five hours together, during which time I heard his confeſſion, and communicated him to his great joy and ſatisfaction. I ventured likewiſe, through his deſire, to be preſent at his execution, and placed myſelf boldly next the under-ſheriff, near the gallows, where I had the opportunity of giving him the laſt abſolution, juſt as he was turned off

the ladder. During his impriſonment he carried himſelf like a true ſervant and diſciple of his crucified Maſter, thirſting after nothing more than the ſhedding of his blood for the love of his *God*, which he performed with a courage and cheerfulneſs becoming a valiant ſoldier of *Chriſt*, to the great edification of all Catholics and admiration of all Proteſtants, the rational and moderate part eſpecially, who ſhowed a great ſenſe of ſorrow for his death, decrying the cruelty of putting men to death for prieſthood and religion. *He is the firſt that ever ſuffered at Worceſter ſince the Catholic religion entered this nation*,* which he ſeemed with joy to tell me before his execution. He was quartered, and his head ſeparated from his body, according to his ſentence. His body was permitted to be buried, and was accompanied by the Catholics of the town to St. *Oſwald's* churchyard, where he lies interred. His head I got privately and conveyed it to Mr. *Randolph*, who will be careful to keep it till opportunity ſerves to tranſport it to *Douay*, &c. The miſeries we here lie under are great, and I hope our brothers in ſafety will be mindful of our condition in their beſt thoughts, and beg of *God* we may cheerfully bear our croſſes, and if it be His holy will, courageouſly ſacrifice our lives in defence of our religion, which is the earneſt deſire of, &c., *William Leviſon*. Auguſt 25, 1679."

It was on the 22nd of Auguſt that Father *Wall* was executed, and the ſcene of the butchery was probably at *Red Hill*, about a mile out on the

* How this miſtake could have ariſen, when *Oldcorn* was executed at *Worceſter* only ſeventy-three years before, I cannot imagine.

London Road. His head was kept in the cloiſter of the *Engliſh* Friars at *Douay;* and the Catholic writers declared that "for ſome time afterwards, his grave, at St. *Oſwald's* burying-ground, appeared green, while the reſt of the churchyard was all bare, it being then a conſtant thoroughfare. Before his death, Father *Wall* compoſed a long ſpeech, which he delivered to a friend to be printed, in which he declares his faith, hope, and charity, together with his abhorrence of all plots and conſpiracies. He implores *God's* mercy for himſelf, for the church, for king and kingdom, and for his perſecutors, whom he forgives, and aſks pardon of all whom he might have offended; and finally offers up his death to *God* and commends his ſoul into His hands.

It ſeems that the poor prieſt was interrupted in delivering his ſpeech, "and that which he did ſpeak, being taken by an unſkilful ſcribe, was printed by halves, and ſo imperfectly, that it was in ſome places nonſenſe. To correct that abuſe (ſays his friend), this which he did ſpeak is publiſhed by a friend."

I have inſpected St. *Oſwald's* regiſter, with the view of diſcovering a memorial of Father *Wall*, but the records do not go ſo far back, the older ones having been deſtroyed. *Red Hill* ſeems to have been the place for the execution of religious and other offenders up to the beginning of the

nineteenth century. I believe the laſt execution there was on the 28th July, 1809, when *Patrick Jordan* and *Thomas Brady* were hung for robbing and beating Mr. *C. Bayley*, on *Bromſgrove Lickey*. There is, however, no record of this fact in the books of the County Gaol, for it appears that when Mr. *Davies* (predeceſſor of the late Mr. *Lavender*) reſigned the governorſhip of the priſon, he took away all the books and documents with him, and ſold them as private property to *Butler*, the then landlord of the Saracen's Head Inn, by whom they were converted into ſpills for lighting pipes!

The Judge *Atkins* mentioned in the above trial was a native of *Glouceſterſhire*, a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas during the reign of *Charles II*, and Lord Chief Baron after the Revolution; he was an eminent and learned lawyer, much diſtinguiſhed for his attachment to popular rights, and for the uprightneſs and independence of his conduct during a period of judicial profligacy and ſubſerviency; nevertheleſs, from his language and conduct on the trials of the Jeſuit prieſts and other perſons charged with the Popiſh plot in 1679, he appears to have partaken of the deluſion which pervaded the country reſpecting that tranſaction, and to have played his part in the diſgraceful tragedies then enacted in Weſtminſter Hall.

As an inſtance of the extreme jealouſy and

watchfulneſs exerciſed over Papiſts at this time, it may be ſtated that Dame *Mary Yate*, a daughter of the houſe of *Pakington*, who is commemorated on a monument at *Chaddeſley* church, and who was then about ſeventy years old, being a Catholic, on applying for leave to paſs beyond the ſeas for the benefit of her health, obtained permiſſion only after being fenced round by a number of proviſos and precautions, to the effect that the ſaid old lady ſhould "give ſecurity not to enter into any plott or conſpiracy, and ſhould not repaire to the cittie of Rome, or returne unto this kingdom, without firſt acquainting one of His Majeſty's principal Secretaries of State;" and on this condition only was the ſaid dame "to imbarque with her trunkes of apparel and other neceſſaries not prohibited at any porte of this kingdom, and from thence to paſs beyond the ſeas, provided that ſhe depart this kingdom within fourteen dayes." Lady *Mary* was a ſtaunch Catholic, and conveyed a large portion of her eſtate, to the extent of ſome 600*l.* a year, to Father *Conſtable*, in truſt for the benefit of the clergy at St. *Omer's*, and to pray for her own and her huſband's ſouls, &c.

In the pariſh books of St. *Nicholas*, *Worceſter*, there is an entry, in 1679, "For a warrant to take the names of the Papiſts, 6*d.*" This was probably in conſequence of the excitement fol-

lowing the diſcovery of *Titus Oates's* plot. A ſubſequent alluſion to the Catholics occurs in the ſame books many years afterwards, when it was "agreed that Papiſt *Franks's* child be put on the roll," as though it had been a matter of grave deliberation firſt. Probably this means that belonging to Popiſh parents precluded children from the benefit of being put on the rolls for parochial relief, but that after ſome diſcuſſion this ſingle caſe (a preſſing one of deſtitution, no doubt) was admitted. Again, in 1682 — "For paceboard for the excommunicated p'ſons, 4*d.*;" and in 1683 —"charge of the excommunication, 6*l.* 10*s.*" The above charges were probably for a list of Catholics and others who had been excommunicated in the Eccleſiaſtical Court here, and which liſt was fixed to the church door.

James II's acceſſion to the throne gave the Catholics a brief reſpite, of which the Pope took advantage by dividing *England* into four dioceſes, with a Vicar Apoſtolic to each.

With the year 1685 commences the regiſter of baptiſm of *Worceſter* Catholics, which regiſter is ſaid to be one of the oldeſt exiſting among Catholics in *England.* One of the earlieſt entries in this little book is the following:

"*John Gabriel* was reconciled to ye Church the 6th of March, and having received all ye

rites of ye Church, died ye next morning, but remained a week before he was buried, becauſe Parſon *Pye* had excommunicated him for being a Catholic, but at laſt he was buried at *Monmouth*."

Among the places named in this regiſter as viſited by the prieſts of this neighbourhood for the purpoſe of adminiſtering baptiſm, and doubtleſs, too, of offering up the maſs, are the following: *Hindlip*, *Heighmeadow*, Mrs. *Gibbon's* houſe, Mr. *Thomas Gunter's*, *Chepſtow Grange*, *Wollaſton Grange*, *Collier's*, *Dadmond's*, *Deſborough's*, *Day's*, *Goodman's*, *Maunders*, *Writtle Park*, *Weſt Grimſtead*, *Boſcobel*, &c.

This ſame year (the acceſſion of *James II*) is believed to have been the date either of the erection or adoption of an exiſting houſe on a ſite which is now the corner of Pierpoint Street, on the eaſt ſide of Foregate Street, as a chapel, or oratory, for the Catholics. *Naſh* ſays that the chapel was built in that year, and I find in *Oliver's Biography of the Jeſuits* that *Henry Humberton (alias Hall)*, who was declared Provincial in 1697, and died 1708, preached a ſermon at *Worceſter* in April, 1686, on the ſecond Sunday after Eaſter, no doubt in the newly-erected chapel. When the King viſited *Worceſter*, in 1687, after attending at the Cathedral on the feaſt of St. *Bartholomew*, to gratify ſuch as offered themſelves to be touched for the king's evil, His

Majeſty went to hear maſs at the Popiſh chapel, on which occaſion the Mayor (ſuppoſed to be *Shewring)* won immortal praiſe from the hiſtorians of *Worceſter* for refusing to accompany the King any further than the doors of the chapel; whereas the corporation records prove that his Worſhip and the grave and reverend Aldermen, his companions, preferred Proteſtant guzzling to Catholic religious ſervices, a charge of 2*s.* (equal to nearly 1*l.* of our preſent money) having been ſubſequently made on the city funds for their drinking at the Green Dragon, an adjoining inn, during the time of maſs. When the King left the chapel, he returned to the Palace, where the good Biſhop *Thomas* had provided a princely dinner; but the poor prelate had the mortification to hear a Romiſh prieſt ordered to invoke a bleſſing, and his own offer to perform that part of his duty rejected by the King, who ſaid he would ſpare him that trouble, for that he had a chaplain of his own. No doubt the poor Biſhop turned away with a tear in his eye and a ſinking in his heart at the foreſight of coming troubles.

Biſhop *Thomas*, however, remained true to his unworthy maſter; for though he refuſed to read and circulate the King's memorable declaration as to the ſuſpenſion of the penal laws againſt nonconformiſts, in June, 1688, and for which he incurred the ſevere diſpleaſure of the Court, he

ſubſequently declined to take the oath of allegiance to *William III*, and actually vacated his ſee rather than abandon that duty which he believed was owing to the unfortunate *James*. But the fate of this wretched monarch was ſoon decided; and at the Revolution of 1688, although King *William* allowed the unrepealed acts againſt Catholics to ſink partially into abeyance, he ſubſequently paſſed an act to prevent the growth of Popery, by which a reward of 100*l.* was offered for apprehending any prieſt or Jeſuit.

To ſhow the ſenſe of the people of *Worceſter*, at the time of the landing of the Prince of *Orange*, it may be ſtated that the *Worceſter* Corporation then paſſed a reſolution as follows:

"We, the Mayor, Aldermen, Sheriff, Town Council, and citizens of the city of *Worceſter*, whoſe names are ſubſcribed, do declare that to our utmoſt endeavours in our ſeveral ſtations and places we will aid and aſſiſt His Highneſs the Prince of *Orange*, and all thoſe that ſhall oppoſe the deſperate attempts and conſpiracies of the Papiſts and their adherents, and to the hazard of our lives will preſerve His Majeſty's moſt ſacred perſon, uphold the Proteſtant religion by law eſtabliſhed, and maintain the ancient liberties of this kingdom."

Catholic chapels were now everywhere ruthleſſly deſtroyed; that at *Worceſter* no doubt

ſharing the fame fate. *Macaulay* ſtates that when the *Dutch* army was marching from *Torbay* towards *London*, in 1688, Sir *E. Harley*, of *Brampton Brian*, and his ſon *Robert* (afterwards, as Earl of *Oxford*, Queen *Anne's* miniſter, and a high churchman), declared for the Prince of *Orange* and a free Parliament, raiſed a large body of horſe, took poſſeſſion of *Worceſter*, and evinced their zeal againſt Popery by publicly breaking to pieces, in the High Street, a piece of ſculpture which to rigid preciſians ſeemed idolatrous.

But however relentleſſly the Catholics were purſued at this period, no blood was ſhed; another ſtep had been gained in the progreſs of religious liberty, and the ancient diſputes now took a controverſial turn. Dr. *Stillingfleet*, Biſhop of *Worceſter*, who is ſaid to have had "no equal in eccleſiaſtical learning, was an elegant preacher and a maſterly diſputant, exerciſed himſelf in ſeveral noted controverſies, and with a reputation of advantage. He was a victorious combatant of Papiſts, diſſenters, and Socinians, and no unequal opponent of the great *Locke*. He may be accounted the *Bellarmine* of the Church of *England*."

There were at that time in *Worceſter* province 719 Papiſts above the age of ſixteen, the proportion of conformiſts to nonconformiſts being nearly twenty-three to one, and of conformiſts to Papiſts 179 to one. In the reign of *James II* there

were Franciſcans in *Worceſter* (as Father *Waterworth* informs me), but when they came, where they reſided, or how long they remained, are queſtions to which I can find no anſwer.

About the period 1701-4, Father *Ruſſell*, a Jeſuit, was ſerving in "St. *George's* reſidence, *Worceſter;*" and in 1708, Father *Beeſton*. The latter was educated at St. *Omer's*, made his ſolemn vows of religion in 1698, and was ſent to the *Worceſter* miſſion, but recalled in 1708 to *Watton*, to fill the poſt of maſter of the novices, and died at St. *Omer's* in 1732.

In the *Georgian* era the perſecution of the Catholics was continued. *Walpole* viſited "reputed Papiſts" with heavy taxes on their lands and eſtates, and all Catholics were compelled, within ſix months of their coming of age, to regiſter their names and eſtates with the Clerk of the Peace, otherwiſe their poſſeſſions were forfeited; and as late as the year 1769 the Hon. *James Talbot* was tried for his life at the Old Bailey for ſaying maſs, and only eſcaped through want of evidence. In thoſe days, if a Catholic travelled by waggon or ſtage coach he was wiſe if he held his tongue on religious matters, ſo intenſe was ſtill the national feeling againſt Popery: the proſcribed party were at the mercy of any one who wiſhed to injure or inſult them, and every neighbouring magiſtrate was too willing

at a moment's notice to tender the oath ſo obnoxious to their feelings. The Teſt and Corporation Acts, too, had long excluded them from all offices. There are ſome probably ſtill living who remember the difficulties and privations with which the Catholics had to contend at the cloſe of the laſt century---how they were driven to have their chapels ſecluded and to go to them in a circuitous way to avoid ſuſpicion: if their meeting houſe was in the country (as at *Blackmoor Park*, near *Malvern*) it was a mere upper room, and a truſty watchman was ſtationed near at hand to prevent the approach of ſuſpicious parties; while in towns they often aſſembled in ſtables or public houſes under the guiſe of a club, and with pots of beer before them to miſlead the domeſtics, but when left to themſelves they would purſue their devotions. On the whole, however, Catholics breathed more freely than before, and were enabled to eſtabliſh ſchools, one of which (by the Benedictines) was at *Redmarley*, in this county, and another at *Sedgley Park*, near *Wolverhampton*, in a manſion belonging to the Lord *Dudley and Ward*. In 1768, this eſtabliſhment was transferred to Dr. *Hornyold*, Vicar Apoſtolic of the Midland Diſtrict; he was a deſcendant of the *Hornyolds* of *Hanley Caſtle*, and having ſtudied and received ordination at *Douay*, he entered upon his firſt miſſion at *Grantham*, and ſoon

became remarkable for zeal and courage. Once, in the midſt of a terrible ſtorm, he was informed that one of his flock who lived at a diſtance was in danger of death, whereupon he immediately ſet out, and ſwam his horſe through a river ſwollen with the flood, to the imminent danger both of horſe and rider. On another occaſion, a conſtable coming to ſeize him as a Catholic prieſt, juſt when he was concluding maſs, barely ſufficient time was allowed him to ſave himſelf by ſubſtituting a female cap for his flowing periwig, and throwing a woman's cloak over his veſtments; in this diſguiſe he placed himſelf in the corner of a room, and was paſſed by unnoticed. His diſtrict extended from *Yarmouth* to the *Malvern Hills* and *Weſt Shropſhire*, and from *Barton-on-Humber* and *North Derbyſhire* to *Oxford* and *Henley*. Dr. *Hornyold* was aſſiduous in viſiting every part of his charge; he was an abſtemious and a cheerful man; *obiit* December, 1778.

The Jeſuits who ſucceeded Father *Beeſton* at *Worceſter* were *William Baxter* (real name *Caſe*), *Felix Bartlett*, and *Richard Clough*. The firſt was a native of *Lancaſhire*, and joined the Society of *Jeſus* in 1711. After many years' employment in this miſſion, *Oliver* ſays, "he was called to receive his retribution at *Worceſter*, July 13th, 1747, aged fifty-ſeven." This probably means

nothing more than a natural death, for I find no trace of his having come to a violent end. *Bartlett* was born March 19th, 1708, probably at *Worceſter*, where his mother proved herſelf a generous friend of the Jeſuits. At the age of eighteen he enrolled himſelf among the children of St. *Ignatius*, and in 1740 was elevated to the rank of a profeſſed father. *Worceſter* was his chief reſidence, and here he ended his mortal career in 1777. *Richard Clough* was born November 28th, 1728, and at the age of ſixteen dedicated himſelf to *God* in the Society of Jeſuits; nineteen years afterwards he was promoted to the rank of a profeſſed father, and for a conſiderable time (ſays *Oliver*) he was "incumbent of *Worceſter*, where he built the late chapel." Dying here on the 19th of January, 1777, his remains were depoſited in St. *Oſwald's* cemetery. *William Walmeſley*, another Jeſuit father, who was born in *Lancaſhire* in 1712, is ſaid to have died at *Worceſter* in 1769.

In the baptiſmal regiſter before alluded to, diſtinct reference is made to the Catholic chapel at *Worceſter* on the 12th of March, 1749. Perhaps the chapel was ſtill in Foregate Street, for mention is made of a baptiſm in Foregate Street, at Mr. *Berkeley's*, in 1776, and probably the chapel was attached to Mr. *Berkeley's* houſe; yet all the local hiſtorians and guide books ſay that the Catholics had a chapel on the ſite of the

preſent building in "Sanſome Row," or, as it was ſometimes deſcribed, "Sanſome Fields," ever ſince the year 1764. That chapel was, no doubt, the one erected by Father *Clough* (as mentioned above), the former chapel at Mr. *Berkeley's* houſe ſtill remaining as a private oratory.

Thomas Sanders ſucceeded *Richard Clough*, and died at *Worceſter*, November, 1790; he was aſſiſted by one *Wharton* (couſin to Archbiſhop *Carroll*), who ſeceded to the Proteſtant Church and went to *America*. During the incumbency of *Sanders*, too, Father *Bernard Croſs* died at *Worceſter*, in 1785; he was born at *Teneriffe* in 1715, and on his twenty-ſecond birthday conſecrated himſelf to *God* in the Society of Jeſuits; he was admitted to the "profeſſion of the four vows" on the Feaſt of the Aſſumption, 1755; for ſome time he exerciſed his miſſionary functions at *Vera Cruz*, and was for ſeveral years ſtationed in *London* before his coming to *Worceſter*.

All this while the ſpirit of perſecution ſlept not, until the proſpect of the dangers of the *American* war rendered it neceſſary to conſult the goodwill and patriotiſm of all ſects: then the Catholics were indulged (in 1778) by a repeal of moſt of their ſevereſt diſabilities. Proteſtant apprehenſion, however, became greatly arouſed by this leniency, and *Weſley* is accuſed of having

"hounded on" the popular cry againſt the Catholics; the Lord *George Gordon* riots enſued, and after that event a large portion of the Catholic party wavered in their ſubmiſſion to *Rome*, ſought favour of the Proteſtants and thoſe in power, and many went over to the well-endowed eſtabliſhment. *Billinge*, the chaplain at *Moſeley*, and *Wharton* (before-mentioned), who was ſerving the miſſion at *Worceſter*, were ſaid to have been among theſe worldly-minded: both were ſucceſsful muſicians, became fond of company, who applauded their performances, and both fell. *Billinge*, on the laſt Sunday on which he ſaid maſs, told his people at *Moſeley* that if they ſaw anything ſtrange in him they ſhould remember what he had taught them but not follow his example. They underſtood the meaning of this when they heard, on the next Sunday, that he had publicly apoſtatiſed; he afterwards married, and held the living of *Wombourn*. This is the account which Catholic writers give of theſe two men.

With regard to *Wharton*, I find that he became a Proteſtant about the year 1779, and reſided, until 1784, in the houſe attached to the Catholic chapel in Sanſome Fields. He left this country for *America*, where, on his arrival, he publiſhed *A Letter to the Roman Catholics of Worceſter, from the late Chaplain to that Society*,

C. H. Wharton, ſtating the motives which had induced him to relinquiſh their communion and become a member of the Proteſtant Church, denying the infallibility of Pope or Church, aſſerting the right of private judgment, oppoſing celibacy, &c. This pamphlet (which I have ſeen in the *Britiſh* Muſeum) was anſwered by Mr. *Wharton's* couſin, Archbiſhop *Carroll*, and gave riſe to conſiderable controverſy, carried on in print. The Rev. *Arthur Vaughan*, ſucceſſor to Rev. *Charles Dodd*, as Catholic prieſt at *Harvington*, in this county, publiſhed *The Ghoſt of Sanſome Fields, on occaſion of Mr. Wharton's abandoning his Flock at Worceſter;* and Mr. *John Hawkins*, who alſo conformed to the Proteſtant Church in 1779 from having been a monk, and ſoon afterwards married the eldeſt daughter of *R. Burney*, Eſq., of *Barbourne* Lodge, alſo publiſhed two works: 1. *A Letter from a Catholic Chriſtian to his Roman Catholic Friend, ſtating the Reaſon for his Relinquiſhing the Communion of the Church of Rome; Worceſter*, 1780; and 2. *An Eſſay on the Law of Celibacy impoſed on the Clergy of the Roman Catholic Church, interſperſed with various remarks upon ſeveral other parts of their diſcipline; alſo a few remarks on Mr. Carroll's Anſwer to the Roman Catholics of the United States of America, occaſioned by Mr. Wharton's Letter, in which he had ſtated his*

Reaſons for Relinquiſhing the Communion of the Church of Rome; 1784-5, 4*s.*6*d.*:" and other works.

In the year 1791 a bill was paſſed repealing various ſtatutes and tolerating the ſchools and the religious worſhip of Catholics; and in the ſame year I find that *Robert Berkeley* of *Spetchley*, *T. Hornyold* the younger of *Blackmoor Park*, *John Baynham* of *Purſhall* Hall, clerk, *Thomas Parker* of *Heath Green*, *Beoley*, and *Mary Williams* of *Little Malvern*, ſubſcribed certificates that they had ſet apart rooms in their reſpective houſes for *Roman* Catholic worſhip. In 1796, *Andrew Robinſon*, clerk, of *Grafton Manor*, and *Richard Cornthwaite*, clerk, of *Harvington* Hall, *Chaddeſley*, ſet apart rooms for the ſame purpoſe.

Eight thouſand exiled prieſts were driven into *England* by the great *French* Revolution; and though moſt of them returned in the following year, in conſequence of *Pius VII* treating with *Napoleon*, thoſe who remained here denounced the Pope's arrangement as ſchiſmatical, and a ſerious diviſion took place in the Catholic party. *Pius* became *Napoleon's* captive, and did not regain his liberty till the year 1814, when it was actually to the Proteſtant bayonets of the *Britiſh* troops that His Holineſs owed his protection at *Genoa*, when the Emperor eſcaped from *Elba*. All this while the *Britiſh* Parliament had been

entertaining bills for the emancipation of the Catholics and for eſtabliſhing a Proteſtant veto on their appointment of biſhops. Then it was that *Sydney Smith* launched his famous invectives againſt the penal ſtatutes, as being the moſt cruel and atrocious ſyſtem of perſecution ever inſtituted by one religious body againſt another; and this paved the way for the relief of 1829.

During the *French* Revolution, and up to the period of the emancipation, the names of Jeſuits and prieſts ſtationed at *Worceſter* were---*Williams*, *Morris*, *Robinſon*, *Norris*, *Triſtram*, *Leadbetter*, and *Sewell*. *Joſeph Williams* (whoſe family name was *Gittings*) was born in 1744, admitted a Jeſuit in 1762, died at *Worceſter* on Lady Day, 1797, and was buried at St. *Oſwald's*. *John Morris* was born in *Lancaſhire* in 1770. Soon after his receiving holy orders his ſervices were beſtowed on the *Worceſter* miſſion, where he arrived for the Eaſter of 1797.

"Here (ſays *Oliver*) this zealous and moſt diſintereſted man deſerved to be regarded as the father of the poor. Naturally baſhful and retired, yet in the circle of his immediate acquaintance his converſation abounded with information, and was enlivened and enriched with ſprightly humour and anecdote. It pleaſed Almighty *God* to purify his ſervant by a long and painful illneſs, which he endured with edifying patience, reſignation, and fortitude. He was releaſed from his ſufferings

about four p.m. on Sunday, 3rd of October, 1830, and was buried in the cemetery of the new chapel."

Andrew Robinſon was born in *Yorkſhire* in 1741, admitted to the Society of *Jeſuits* in 1763, and after ſerving the *Engliſh* miſſion for nearly ſixty years, he cloſed his lengthened career at *Worceſter*, in February, 1826. *N. Sewell* was born in 1745 in *Maryland*, became a *Jeſuit* in 1766, and in 1821 was Provincial, but reſigning his office five or ſix years afterwards, he proceeded to *Worceſter*, to aſſiſt his valued friend, Rev. *Joſeph Triſtram*, and had the comfort of ſeeing a new, large, and handſome chapel opened in this city on the 16th of July, 1829. He died on the 14th of March, 1834, at the patriarchal age of eighty-nine, and was buried in the cemetery adjoining the chapel.

The year 1829 muſt have afforded a great triumph to the Catholics, eſpecially of *Worceſter*, in witneſſing the ſucceſs of the Emancipation Bill and the erection of their new chapel. The "Right Rev. Dr. *Walſh*, Vicar Apoſtolic of the Midland Diſtrict," officiated at the opening ceremonies, aſſiſted by the Very Rev. Dr. *Weedall*, Preſident of *Oſcot* College, the Rev. Mr. *Morgan*, Sub-Deacon, and numerous of the Catholic clergy. Grand high maſs was celebrated, and Dr. *Weedall* preached in defence of the ordinance of the maſs and the doctrine of the real preſence,

his text being---"*Chriſt* our paſſover is ſacrificed for us." In the afternoon the Rev. Prelate addreſſed the congregation from the altar, explaining ſome of the fundamental doctrines of the Church of *Rome*, and diſavowing many of the obnoxious tenets attributed to its profeſſors by thoſe who diſſented from her precepts, eſpecially thoſe relating to the keeping faith with heretics. The ſum of 48*l.* was collected.

Before the Catholic relief meaſure was paſſed, a great ſtruggle took place throughout the country, in which *Worceſterſhire* fully participated. An addreſs to the King and petitions againſt Catholic emancipation, agreed upon at a meeting at the *Worceſter* Guildhall, were each ſigned by upwards of 6000 perſons; and in the *Dudley* petition the column of ſignatures meaſured 230 feet. Of theſe ſignatures three were actually thoſe of Catholics, the writers obſerving---"We have liberty enough already, and thoſe who want more want it for no good." By the Emancipation Bill, Catholics were ſtill forbidden to aſſume the title of Proteſtant ſees; all *Jeſuits* and monaſtic orders were to be ſuppreſſed, and numerous penalties were allowed to remain on the ſtatute book; yet nearly all theſe have become obſolete. The *Oxford* tractarian movement is the next feature to be noticed in connection with the progreſs of Catholiciſm: *Ward*, *Puſey*, and *Newman*, did

their work, and the *Romiſh* Church reaped a rich harveſt. In the year 1840 the Vicars Apostolic in *England* were increaſed from four to eight, as a preparation for a further change, namely, the reſtoration of the hierarchy; and after much heat and diſſenſion among the people, this ſtep was achieved in 1850, when the whole kingdom, together with *Wales*, was formed into a province, containing one metropolitan ſee of *Weſtminſter* and twelve ſuffragan ſees.

The names of the Jeſuits and prieſts who have been located at *Worceſter* ſince the opening of the new chapel in 1829 are---*Poſtlewhite*, *Rigby*, *Brownbill*, *McClune*, *C. Lomax*, *Chadwick*, *W. Lomax*, *Jarrett*, *Beeſton*, *Bateman*, *Corr*, *Swale*, *Holden*, *Bird*, *Laurenſon*, *Cooper*, *F. Jarrett*, *W. Waterworth*, and *Meagher*, the two latter being the prieſts now (1860) in reſidence here.

Among the Jeſuits and other Catholics (not mentioned in the foregoing account) connected with the city and county of *Worceſter* were---*Francis Young* of *Worceſterſhire*, who, quitting *Oxford*, entered the *Engliſh* College at *Rome* in 1598. He is deſcribed as "a good controverſial father." *Richard Briſtow* was born at *Worceſter* and educated at *Oxford*, where he and *Campion* entertained Queen *Elizabeth* with a public diſputation, and acquitted themſelves ſo as to gain much applauſe. He ſhortly afterwards conformed to the

Church of *Rome*, and was invited by the famous *Allen*, afterwards Cardinal, to *Douay*, where he diſtinguiſhed himſelf in the *Engliſh* College, as he alſo did ſubſequently at *Rheims*. *Briſtow* is ſaid to have "rivalled *Allen* in prudence, *Stapleton* in acuteneſs, *Campion* in eloquence, *Wright* in theology, and *Martin* in languages." His death was occaſioned by ſevere application to his ſtudies. *William Morton*, born in *Worceſterſhire* in 1597, admitted among the Jeſuits at the age of thirty-three, and is thus deſcribed—"*Juvat noſtros in Anglia multiplici miniſterio;*" *obiit* 1667. *John Harriſon*, born in *Worceſterſhire* in 1615, and died at the age of ſixty-three. *John Mace*, a "temporal coadjutor," was alſo a native of *Worceſterſhire;* he died at *Rome* 14th September, 1689, aged ſixty-nine. *James Lane*, born in *Worceſterſhire* in 1737, admitted a *Jeſuit* at the age of twenty-one, and paſſed through his ſtudies with diſtinguiſhed honours; he reſided at *Norwich* for half a century, and died in 1821. Laſtly, *Clement Weetman*, born in *Staffordſhire* in 1781, and taking upon himſelf the *Grafton* miſſion, died at *Worceſter* in 1813, and was buried at St. *Oſwald's*.

The number of Jeſuits in this province at preſent (1860) is ſuppoſed to be about 260; of theſe, however, only one-half are yet prieſts. The *Worceſter* congregation of Catholics number nearly 1500, but many of theſe live out of the city, and many are *Iriſh*.

It will thus be ſeen how this proſcribed church paſſed through the fiery ordeal which they had for ſo lengthened a period adminiſtered to others, and how they gradually emerged from their oppreſſed condition to breathe with ſomething of the freedom enjoyed by their fellow creatures. The rancour of the national hatred ſeems at length to have died out, and left the work of converſion to be effected by argument and holy example rather than by the faggot or the gallows. Even ſo let it be; for, as the author of *The Ingle Nook* obſerves, "The humble, the meek, the merciful, the juſt, the pious, and the devout, are everywhere of one religion; and when Death has taken off the maſk they will know one another, though the liveries they wear here make them ſtrangers."

Independents, or Congregationaliſts.

"YET theſe are the men cried out againſt for ſchiſmatics and ſectaries, as if, while the temple of the LORD was building, ſome cutting, ſome ſquaring the marble, others hewing the cedars, there ſhould be a ſort of irrational men, who could not conſider there muſt be many schiſms and many diſſections made in the quarry and in the timber ere the houſe of GOD can be built. And when every ſtone is laid artfully together, it cannot be united into a continuity, it can be but contiguous in this world; neither can every piece of the building be of one form; nay, rather the perfection conſiſts in this, that out of many moderate varieties and brotherly diſſimilitudes that are not vaſtly diſproportional, ariſes the goodly and the graceful ſymmetry that commends the whole pile and ſtructure."---MILTON.

QUEEN *Elizabeth*, by her Act of Uniformity, and *James*, by his mockery of a conference at *Hampton Court*, occaſioned the two great ſeceſſions of the Puritan party from the Church of *England*, whoſe canons then for the firſt time placed them under the ban of excommunication and "abandoned them to the wrath of *God*." For a long time they had denounced the ſurplice and other clerical garments, as the "laſt rags of *Rome*," and now that the King and *Bancroft* would force upon them

the *Books of Canons* and *Common Prayer*, with ſome ceremonies to which they ſtrongly objected, a ſeparation took place. *Blunt*, in his *Hiſtory of the Reformation*, remarks---

"It ſeems a ſtrange thing to us that men ſhould have been found ready to make ſhipwreck of charity, and to riſk the Reformation altogether (for the *Roman* Catholics were on the alert to profit by the diviſion) upon matters ſo unimportant in themſelves as the colour or material of a coat, or that ſuch preciſians ſhould have been met with as expected and required the actual warrant of Scripture for every trivial matter which they did throughout the day, to the utter extinction of Chriſtian liberty."

But ſurely the claims of a pious, earneſt, and numerous body of religioniſts are not to be diſpoſed of with a ſneer. To juſt and reaſonable minds, indeed, the demands of the Puritans ſeem to have been ſufficiently limited: they aſked for a new and correct tranſlation of the *Bible*, and increaſed zeal in teaching its holy truths; they required that lay impropriations ſhould be made to maintain miniſters in diſtricts where none had been previouſly located, and that thoſe of the clergy who had an averſion to genuflexions, white ſurplices, and ſuch-like things, ſhould not be caſt out of their pariſhes, but allowed a little Chriſtian liberty in

matters ſo non-eſſential. Theſe were the principal claims advanced by that perſecuted band of men who were ſo ſoon to experience the cruelty of other profeſſing Chriſtians, and many to ſeek for liberty, if not happineſs, on the ſtrange ſhores of the new world.

No doubt at this time the Church loſt many of her beſt men; but may we not herein trace the finger of an overruling Providence? For what reader of hiſtory can now fail to perceive that the exiſtence of ſects in religion is as eſſential to the mutual efficiency of themſelves and of the Eſtabliſhed Church as a ſtrong and vigilant oppoſition in Parliament is neceſſary for the proſecution of the national weal? Many, however, of the more moderate claſs of nonconformiſts, without ſeceding from the Church communion, acknowledged the corruptions which they had not power to remedy, and earneſtly ſought every opportunity for their reform. "Before their departure for America (ſays *Wilson*, in his *Pilgrim Fathers*), they drew up a letter, addreſſed 'to the reſt of their brethren in and of the Church of England,' wherein they ſay---

"'We deſire you would be pleaſed to take notice of the principals and body of our company, as thoſe who eſteem it our honour to call the Church of *England*, from whence we ariſe, our dear mother; and cannot part from our native

country, where ſhe ſpecially reſideth, without much ſadneſs of heart and many tears in our eyes; ever acknowledging that ſuch hope and part as we have obtained in the common ſalvation we have received in her boſom, and ſucked it from her breaſts. We leave it not, therefore, as loathing that milk, wherewith we were nouriſhed, but, bleſſing *God* for the parentage and education, as members of the ſame body ſhall always rejoice in her good, and unfeignedly grieve for any ſorrow that ſhall ever betide her; and while we have breath, ſincerely deſire and endeavour the continuance and abundance of her welfare, with the enlargement of her bounds in the kingdom of *Chriſt Jeſus.*'"

The Preſbyterians were generally conſidered the legitimate deſcendants of the Puritans; and as the name Preſbyterian has been much mixed up with Independent, and the two ſects confounded together and miſtaken for each other (eſpecially at *Worceſter*, where, as will be ſeen in courſe of the following hiſtory, the term Preſbyterian was frequently, though erroneouſly, applied to the Society of Independents, or Congregationaliſts), it may be as well to ſtate at the outſet the diſtinguiſhing difference between the two ſects. Preſbyterians recogniſe no office in the Church as ſuperior to that of a preſbyter, believing that all miniſters, being ambaſſadors of *Chriſt*, are equal by commiſſion; that preſbyter, or elder, or biſhop, are only different names for

the ſame office; and that deacons are laymen whoſe office is chiefly to take care of the poor. Their mode of church government is by preſbyteries, ſynods, and general aſſemblies. The preſent *Scottiſh* Kirk, founded by *Knox*, about 1560, is Preſbyterian, and the firſt Preſbyterian congregation in England was formed at *Wandſworth*, near *London*, in 1572.

The Independents, or Congregationaliſts, ſprang up early in the ſeventeenth century, the firſt church of that ſect having been founded, in 1616, by Mr. *Henry Jacob*, a *Kentiſh* man, who is ſaid to have been "moſt excellently well read in theological authors, but withal a moſt zealous Puritan," or, as his ſon *Henry* uſed to ſay, "the firſt Independent in *England*." Mr. *Robinſon* is ſaid by ſome to be the founder of this ſociety. They were diſtinguiſhed from Preſbyterians and Baptiſts chiefly by being oppoſed to any union or government of the church, and by regarding each congregation of faithful men as independent of every other, and competent to its own government, without interference from Preſbyteries, biſhops, or from the ſtate itſelf. *Robert Brown*, a clergyman of the time of *Elizabeth*, is alſo reputed to have been the firſt perſon in *England* who acted upon theſe opinions. His followers did not differ from the Church of *England* ſo much in articles of faith as in matters of diſci-

pline, in which they were exceſſively rigid. *Brown*, who was a man of violent paſſions, everywhere inveighed againſt the Church, her ordinances, and ſacraments, and formed a ſeparate congregation on his own principles. At length, however, he renounced theſe views, and became rector of a church in *Northamptonſhire*, and died in gaol, whither he had been committed for ſtriking a conſtable who had demanded a rate of him. He boaſted that he had been committed to thirty-two priſons, in ſome of which he could not ſee his hand at noon-day! The Independents, who are uniformly Calviniſts, may have originally ſprung from the Browniſts, but they ſoon became a diſtinct ſect from the latter, who have long ceaſed to exiſt---at all events as a body bearing that deſignation---and both in the moderation of their ſentiments and the order of their diſcipline the Independents greatly excelled them. Dr. *John Owen*, Dr. *Iſaac Watts*, Dr. *Doddridge*, and *Job Orton*, were among the great men belonging to this ſociety. *Hume* ſays of the Independents---"But of all Chriſtian ſects, this was the firſt which, during its proſperity, as well as its adverſity, always adopted the principles of toleration; and it is remarkable that ſo reaſonable a doctrine owed its origin not to reaſoning, but to the height of extravagance and fanaticiſm." Nevertheleſs, when the Independents, among

other diſſenters, had eſcaped the frightful perſecution of *Charles* and *Laud*, they treated Popery and prelacy with a rigour ſavouring of revenge---the feeling againſt Rome being a common ground in which all ſectaries naturally concurred. The Preſbyterians, indeed, when they had obtained power, impoſed, with the ſame ſeverity as their predeceſſors had done, their own creeds and confeſſions, and inveſted their magiſtrates with the ſame power of puniſhing with temporal pains and penalties diſſenters from their eſtabliſhment---

> "A quiet conſcience makes one ſo ſerene:
> Chriſtians have burnt each other, quite perſuaded
> That all the Apoſtles would have done as they did."

During the Civil Wars and the Commonwealth, the Preſbyterians obtained the aſcendancy in Parliament, and the Independents in the army; *Cromwell* of courſe favouring the latter, though he conciliated the Preſbyterian party by placing ſome of them on his commiſſion of triers for the approval of preachers throughout the country. This "committee of preaching miniſters" was appointed to ſend preachers where they were required, and to provide for their maintenance. The practice of preaching, which before the Reformation had been very uncommon, after that epoch became irregular and limited by authority; in general the ſermon was written out, learnt, and delivered from memory; but the impaſſioned

addreſſes of *Hancock* and the long ſermons of *Hugh Peters* never were learned by heart: they preached too often, and the hour-glaſs was too frequently turned for this to have been the caſe. *Peters* on one occaſion told his hearers they were good fellows and he would have one glaſs more with them.

An incident is related by *Naſh* which, if it do not refer to the early progreſs of Preſbyterianiſm in *Worceſterſhire*, I am at a loſs to what to aſcribe it, unleſs the printer made an error in the date: *

"*Eliazar Jackſon* (he ſays), incumbent of *Powick*, in the year 1622, being much preſsed to take the ſolemn league and covenant, he deſired till the next morning to conſider of it. When the morning came, he ſaid that on the preceding night he had had a great loſs: that having read the ſolemn league and covenant before he went to

* The author of *The Parallel*, a tract publiſhed in 1682, ſays---"The firſt factious union we read of made uſe of to reſiſt any lawful authority was that in the year 1638, when the young embryo of a covenant was firſt hatched in *Scotland*, about *Glaſgow*, and which ſerved for a type and copy to thoſe ſeveral that have ſince followed. * * An *Engliſh* oath and covenant came out on the 6th of June, 1643, and ſeemed the effect of the cities importunity---His Majeſty's loyal city---yet I think ſeldom called ſo but in ſome appeal from the country, or in the head of their own petitions. The citizens promiſed the loan of 40,000*l.* demanded by Parliament, upon condition only of the league and covenant being impoſed on the whole kingdom; a great ſum for the purchaſe of their own ſlavery, but a ſmall price for the head of a king." The ſolemn league and covenant was profeſſed and ſworn in *England*, *Scotland*, and *Ireland*, in the year 1643, but it might have been agitated throughout the country ſome years earlier.

bed, he left it upon his table; that ſome rogues broke in and ſtole all his plate and moſt of his goods, but that, rogues as they were, they had not taken the ſolemn league and covenant, and therefore he begged to be excuſed."

The juſtices and gentry of *Worceſterſhire* petitioned Parliament at the Chriſtmas Seſſions, 1641, in favour of "the continuance of Church government, and eſtabliſhing the liturgy and uniform ſervice of *God* among us," and proteſting againſt "the inſolencies and extravagancies which have been lately introduced by divers ſects and ſchiſms, and many dangerous doctrines publicly vented." And on Auguſt 3rd, 1642, a declaration and proteſtation made by the Grand Jury for the county of *Worceſter* was aſſented to by the High Sheriff, as alſo by Lord *Coventry* and many Magiſtrates, "to defend and maintain the Proteſtant religion againſt Popiſh recuſants, Anabaptiſts, and all other ſeparatiſts." The ſtrife of politics and religion was now at its height, and the devoted city of *Worceſter* fully ſhared the horrors of the Civil Wars. *Hugh Peters*, mentioned above, is ſaid to have preached at *Worceſter* Cathedral on the 24th of July, 1646, when the city had ſurrendered to the Parliamentary forces; and the occaſion of that memorable ſiege, as narrated in *Townſend's Annals*, will ſerve to ſhow how far the religious element was introduced into the

principal affairs of the day. The King's friends on *Worceſter* walls, and the Roundheads who were the beſiegers, complimented each other, it seems, in good ſet terms whenever an opportunity occurred. "Ill rayling language the ſeveral guards uſually at and in the night gave one another, the enemy calling ours Papiste dogs, *Waſhington's* baſtards, *Ruſſell's* apes, and saying 'Where is your king, you rogges? where is your tottered king?' Ours replying and callyng them traitors, felons, rogges to theyr king and country, the ſons of a Puritan bitch, and bid them goe preach in a crab-tree, and come and fetch theyr colours which they loſt, and 'Where are the *Scots*, you roggues, whom you hired to fight againſt your king?'"

Mr. *Townſend*, a Magiſtrate of *Worceſterſhire*, in his MSS., under date May 1, 1646 (ſame year as the above-named ſiege of *Worceſter*), records the following as a then current ſquib againſt all claſſes of diſſenters:

"There was a gentleman who being very melancholy at these diſtracted tymes, and the infinite miſeries that hath befallen this late flouriſhing kingdom, falls into a diſcontented humour or rapture to decipher the perſons myſtically and in a riddle, leaving the reader to unriddle who are the only troublers of the peace of the Church and State:

"There dwells a people on the earth
That reckons true religion treaſon,
That makes ſad war an holy mirth,
Count madneſs zeal and nonſenſe reaſon;
That think no freedom but in ſlavery,
That makes lyes truth, religion knavery;
That rob and cheat with 'yea and nay;'
Riddle me, riddle me, who are they?

That makes kings great by curbing crowns,
That ſettle peace by plundering towns;
That govern with implicit votes,
That 'ſtabliſh truth by cutting throats;
That kiſs their maſter and betray;
Riddle me, riddle me, who are they?"

In 1649 the Preſbyterian diſcipline was ſanctioned by Parliament, and the Eſtabliſhed Church thus became Preſbyterian until Epiſcopacy was reſtored with *Charles II.* Great jealouſies exiſted between the two principal ſects, the Independents uſing every effort to prevent the eſtabliſhment of a Preſbyterian church, while the latter partly originated every calumny they could think of againſt the religioniſts in the army, whom they ſtigmatiſed by the vileſt names; but *Cromwell* and his "invincibles" were not to be thwarted by ſuch opponents, nor even by a ſubſequent Parliament, which prayed and ſought counſel of Heaven from eight in the morning till ſeven p.m.: that auguſt and pious body were informed by the General that "the *Lord* had finiſhed all further trouble upon the matter by the marvellous ſalvation wrought at *Worceſter*," where they had ſung pſalms and drubbed all before

them, as Sir *Francis Doyle* has it in his poem of *The Cavalier*---

> "And though they ſnuffled pſalms, to give
> Theſe rebel dogs their due,
> When the roaring ſhot poured thick and hot,
> They were ſtalwart men and true."

The year 1649 alſo witneſſed the abolition of Deans and Chapters, and the Independents of *Worceſter* (or Preſbyterians as they were called) took poſſeſſion of the Cathedral for the purpoſe of their religious worſhip. Mr. *Simon Moore* was then one of their preachers. *Baxter*, however, at that time was the great light of nonconformity in *Worceſterſhire*, although during the Civil Wars he held a poſition by which he was connected with both the oppoſite parties in the ſtate and yet was the partiſan of neither. In matters of diſcipline and church government he occupied a middle ground between Epiſcopalians and Preſbyterians, and much buſied himſelf in the attempt to effect an union of the diſcordant elements by which he was ſurrounded. The views he entertained being blended with the principles of monarchy rendered them very popular towards the cloſe of *Cromwell's* career. His *Agreement for Church Order and Concord* was ſigned, among others, by Mr. *Joſeph Baker* and Mr. *Juice*, both of *Worceſter;* and in 1658 he publiſhed a pamphlet (which I met with in the

library of the *British Museum*) entitled *Judgment and Advice of the Assembly of the Associated Ministers of Worcestershire, held at Worcester, Aug.* 6, 1658, *concerning the endeavours of Ecclesiastical Peace and the waies and meanes of Christian Unity; which Mr. John Durey doth present; sent unto him in the name and by the appointment of the said Assembly. By Richard Baxter, pastor of the church at Kidderminster.*" Signed by him, also by *John Boraston*, pastor of the church at *Bewdley; Thomas Wright*, *Hartlebury; Giles Collyer*, *Blockley; G. Hopkins*, *Evesham;* and *Jos. Trebell*, *Church Lench.* In this pamphlet all sects of Christians are exhorted to cultivate charity and to sink such minor differences as were non-essential to vital religion. *Baxter's* intercourse with the Independents at *Worcester*, however, was not very intimate, and his preaching in this city seems to have been hindered on several occasions by their intervention. Some circumstances attending his connection with *Worcester* will be found in a document hereafter to be presented to the reader. He narrowly escaped being one of the unhappy victims of the brutal Judge *Jeffries*, by whose sentence he lay in prison eighteen months, but lived to witness the toleration effected by the Revolution of 1688, which he survived for three years.

Cromwell afforded as much indulgence as was in his power to all denominations of Christians,

but both under the Commonwealth and the Protectorate religious toleration was imperfect, in law as well as in practice; and the Protector found it neceſſary in 1651 to paſs a bill "for the prevention of extravagancies in profeſſors of religion," which was aimed principally at a new ſect called Ranters, whoſe profanity and licentiouſneſs in preaching were notorious at the time.

The Reſtoration of the exiled King brought with it the reinſtation of the old ſyſtem of things, and the ejected clergy generally returned to their livings. On Auguſt 31ſt, 1660, ſays the *Townſend* MS.,

"At the Cathedral Church of *Worceſter* was, at ſix in the morning, the firſt morning prayer ſaid in the body of the church, according to the ancient cuſtom, by Mr. *Richard Brown*, ever ſince the reducing (ſurrender) of *Worceſter* to the then Parliamentary forces, July 24, 1646."

September 2nd, 1660---

"There was a very great aſſembly at morning prayer, by ſix in the morning, in the Cathedral of *Worceſter;* and at nine o'clock there appeared again at prayers all the gentry, many citizens, and others numerous, and after prayers Dr. *Doddeſwell*, a new Prebend, did preach the firſt ſermon, the Dean and Prebends being to reſettle the church in its ſervice, and alſo to repair the ſame by degrees, which hardly 10,000*l.* will put

the whole fabrick in that order it was before the barbarous Civil Wars."

Lord *Coventry* gave 500*l.*, and the Biſhop 100*l.*, towards theſe repairs; and the King aſſigned for the ſame purpoſe the improved rents of certain impropriations belonging to the Cathedral which had been made payable to himſelf. April 13, 1661---

"The firſt quire ſervice ſaid and ſung in the Cathedral Church of *Worceſter* ſince the reducing of the city."

October 27th---

"Dr. *Thomas Warmſtry* was brought in this day to *Worceſter*, with about 100 horſe, as Dean of *Worceſter*. The clergy band ſtood ready to receive him in the city, and forty King's ſcholars at the College gates. He alighted at his houſe, the Deanery, put on his robes, and the Prebends and quire met him in the cloiſters, ſang *Te Deum*, then came into the quire, then read his letters patent for Deanery and enjoyment of all rights belonging to his place, took the oaths of ſupremacy, allegiance, and againſt ſimony; and Sub-Dean, Mr. *Giles Thornburgh*, inſtalled him. The quire ſervice finiſhed, every one went to his own place, and in the evening he ſaid ſervice himſelf."

This Dr. *Warmſtry* was a native of *Worceſter*, and in 1640, being Regiſtrar of the Cathedral,

was choſen Proctor in Convocation for this dioceſe, and made a ſpeech againſt images, altars, croſſes, &c., but not coming up fully to the humour of the times, he was forced to fly to the King at *Oxford*. Other of the Cathedral dignitaries, too, had ſuffered ſeverely in the late evil days: Dean *Potter*, who ſent all his plate to *Charles I*, declaring that he himſelf would drink out of his hand, as *Diogenes* had done, rather than His Majeſty ſhould want, was a great ſufferer; and Prebendary *Tyringham* met with barbarous uſage from the Parliamentary ſoldiers. Dean *Potter* was ſucceeded by *Richard Holdſworth*, one of the moſt celebrated preachers of his time, and very acceptable to the *Worceſter* Puritans, of whom many were Preſbyterians or Independents; but ſubſequently he offended the Parliament, was perſecuted and impriſoned. The return of *Charles II* was hailed with bonfires and great rejoicings in *Worceſter;* and in the *Mirabilis Annus* (1661) is an anecdote which will ſhow to what an extent ſuperſtition and religious party feeling prevailed in thoſe days:

"It is certified from very good hands concerning one Mr. *Townſend's* daughter, of the city of *Worceſter*, that being preſent at a bonefire in *Worceſter* the evening of that day (according to our beſt information) when His Majeſty was proclaimed, ſhe drank healths and moſt violently

railed againſt and bitterly curſed the phanaticks, and it pleaſed the *Lord* that the ſame night her ſpeech was ſuddenly taken from her and her tongue very much ſwelled in her mouth; and within four days after, or thereabouts, ſhe died. Her father ſent to Mr. *More*, an eminent (query Independent; ſee page 92) miniſter in that city, deſiring him to bury her with the *Book of Common Prayer*. Upon his refuſal he got one *Horril*, who lived not far from thence---a man of very ill fame---to do it; and when he ſhould have read, his eyeſight was utterly taken away from him; he tried ſeveral books, but could read in none of them, and the people waited nearly a quarter of an hour, till at laſt another perſon was, by the friends of the deceaſed, requeſted to do that office for them, who, though it is thought not canonically qualified for the ſervice, in ſuch an exigency did undertake it, but performed it ſo confuſedly that all preſent were exceedingly aſtoniſhed at it. This is a truth atteſted by ſeveral citizens of note and credit in *Worceſter*, and indeed too notorious to be contradicted by any."

With the Act of Uniformity of *Charles II* (1662) properly commences the hiſtory of Proteſtant Diſſenters in general and of the eſtabliſhment of the Congregationaliſts in *Worceſter*. "Before the day appointed for the enforcement of the act (ſays the Rev. *W. H. Stowell*, in his *Hiſtory of the Puritans*,) ſome of the moſt eminent of the Puritan clergy preached farewell ſermons

to their weeping congregations and reſigned their livings; and when the fatal day arrived, *England* beheld the ſpectacle---unparalleled in the hiſtory of the church---of nearly 2000 clergymen giving up all that was dear to them as gentlemen, ſcholars, and miniſters of religion, for the ſake of truth and a good conſcience. Of the ſeparate churches ſome had been formed long before the Act of Uniformity, by Independents, Baptiſts, and Quakers, and a portion of theſe received not a few both of the miniſters and of the people that were now thrown out of the church. But here the hiſtory of the Puritans as a body in the Anglican Church comes to an end; it belongs to another department to trace the progreſs of the nonconformiſts."

Among the miniſters ejected from the churches of *Worceſter* were Mr. *Simon Moore* and his ſon-in-law, from the Cathedral. *Moore* is deſcribed as an old Independent, and it is ſtated by *Calamy* that "after *Bartholomew* Day, through the fury of the Juſtices and the people, he was forced to leave *Worceſter*, after which he retired to *London*." From St. *Nicholas'* church Mr. *Richard Fincher* was ejected (*Calamy* ſays it was from All Saints'). He is deſcribed, in a funeral ſermon afterwards preached by Mr. *S. Slater*, as "a very gracious and holy man and rich in ſpirituals. He had good natural abilities, cultivated and

improved by learning; he had found mercy to be faithful, ſtanding his ground like a rock in the days of violent temptation; nor would he touch (though he ſaw others ſwallow down) thoſe things which his conſcience told him would prove defiling to himſelf or ſtumbling blocks to others. Yet he was a man of peace, ſo far as ever he could go without forſaking truth and holineſs. He was no incendiary, but was a very modeſt perſon---an induſtrious, painful labourer in *God's* vineyard---in his converſation a ſingular ornament to the Goſpel, and an excellent pattern to them that knew him." From St. *Andrew's* church was ejected Mr. *Joſeph Baker*, "a learned man, of blameleſs life, who preached conſtantly, catechiſed the people, and conferred with families perſonally, eſpecially before he firſt admitted them to the *Lord's* Supper,---a man of extraordinary prudence, calmneſs, patience, gravity, and ſoundneſs of judgment. He was neither for prelacy, preſbytery, or independency, as formed into parties, but for that which was ſound in all parties, and for concord upon catholic terms. The pariſh of St. *Andrew* had but about 6*l.* a year endowment, of which he took nothing, but gave it to a woman to teach poor children to read, and lived upon his own fortune and ſome ſmall augmentation granted by the Parliament. Upon his death-bed he was aſked what thoughts

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he then had of his nonconformity, and replied, that he would gladly have continued his miniſtry if he could have had liberty for it without ſinning againſt *God*, but when it came to that there was no remedy." A Mr. *Thomas Juice (alias Jewkes)* was ejected from ſome other pariſh in *Worceſter* (*Calamy* ſays it was St. *Nicholas*), and of him it is ſtated by *Calamy* that he was "a ſober, grave, ſerious, peaceable, blameleſs, able miniſter. He loſt 100*l.* a year by his ejection; afterwards he taught a ſchool, till the Corporation Act took place, when he was forced to abſcond, and was afterwards paſtor of a congregation at *Reading*, where he died."

The *Public Mercury* of October 31, 1661, ſtates that "The Lord Biſhop of *Worceſter* hath taken prudent care in ſettling choice perſons to perform lectures in his dioceſe, by which means His Majeſty's good ſubjects may hear pure and wholeſome doctrine." This is an indication of the vigilance with which diſſenters were at that time rooted out of the church.

The Act of Uniformity prohibited diſſenters, preaching in conventicles, from coming within five miles of any town, under a penalty of 20*l.*; and whenever five perſons beſides the houſehold aſſembled as a religious congregation they were liable to three months' impriſonment or a fine of 5*l.*; for a ſecond offence, ſix months or 10*l.*;

a third, tranſportation for ſeven years, or to pay 100*l.* No allowance was made to expelled miniſters, although, when the Catholics were deprived of their livings by *Elizabeth*, a proviſion was made for them, and when the Preſbyterians ejected the eſtabliſhed hierarchy one-fifth of each living was given to the ejected clergyman. The Puritans now becoming Proteſtant nonconformiſts, the gaols were quickly filled with them. Some Preſbyterians occaſionally attended the church ſervice, to avoid the penalties, but all others refuſed, and the Quakers were remarkably firm in their oppoſition, never viſiting the ſacred edifice except for the purpoſe of bearding the parſon and challenging him to diſputation. It is ſuppoſed that 8000 perſons periſhed in the reign of *Charles II*, merely for diſſenting from the eſtabliſhment, although theſe diſſenters agreed with the perſecuting body on all eſſential principles.

Among the noble band of miniſters who reſigned, for conſcience ſake, all their means of worldly proſperity, was *Thomas Badland;* he was ejected from *Willenhall*, *Staffordſhire*, and having gathered a few around him at *Worceſter*, whoſe conſcience compelled them to reſiſt the demands of the State, he formed them into a diſtinct congregation of Chriſtians, who aſſembled for worſhip in a ſmall room that ſtood on the ſite of what

was formerly *Barr's* china manufactory, at the bottom of Fiſh Street, a ſpot well known in *Worceſter*. He was the miniſter of that congregation during thirty-eight years, but before his death the declaration of indulgence by *James II* took place in 1687, and immediately on that declaration occurring the church was regularly conſtituted, and Mr. *Badland*, it is believed, adopted the covenant of church memberſhip which had been drawn up by *Baxter* himſelf in terms ſufficiently general to include almoſt all denominations who might chooſe to embrace it as a point of union. *Baxter's* name was a guarantee for the excellence of that covenant, which contained the expreſſion of the ſpirit of his life and writings. Mr. *Badland* died in 1698, and was buried in the chancel of old St. *Martin's* church. In *Naſh's Hiſtory* is the following account: "On a monument fixed to the ſouth wall of the ſouth aiſle of St. *Martin's* church: 'Under theſe ſeats lies interred the body of the Rev. Mr. *Thomas Badland*, a faithful and profitable preacher of the Goſpel in this city for the ſpace of thirty-five years. He reſted from his labours May 5th, A.D. 1698, *æt.* 64: *Mors mihi vita nova.*' "

When St. *Martin's* church was pulled down in 1768, the marble tablet which recorded his name was, with the reſt of the building materials,

thrown careleſſly aſide, and broken in many fragments; theſe were diſcovered and purchaſed by a truſtee of the chapel, and, as the record ſaid, "the tablet was repaired at the expenſe of the congregation, and erected in the veſtibule of Angel Street chapel, where we truſt it will long remain." It did remain there till the chapel was taken down, and it is now erected near the pulpit in the preſent chapel. In the year 1706 a garden was bought, which was leaſehold property belonging to the Corporation of the city of *Worceſter*. The late chapel was erected in that garden. It was then a very obſcure place to get at, approached by three narrow roadways, the wideſt of which was only five feet. The principal approach to the front door was over the ſite now occupied by Mr. *Goodwin's* houſe. Another to the back was through what is now called Smoke Alley, and a third was from the Butts by ſome narrow ſteps over the city wall to the place where the warden's houſe now ſtands. Difficulty of acceſs in thoſe days was not deemed an objection, becauſe it was not uncommon then for aſſemblies, ſuch as took place in the chapel, to be interfered with by mobs, and a narrow acceſs prevented a large mob from getting near. But although the aſſemblies in thoſe days were liable to be attacked by mobs, ſome of the congregation were evidently people of poſition in the city, for it

appears that in the year 1715 one of the members of the church (Mr. *Thomas Yardley*) was Mayor of the city, and the Corporation did him the honour of eſcorting him to the chapel and leaving him at the door. The leaſe, which was for forty-two years, renewable every fourteen, had to be renewed in 1763; and about 1740, more than twenty years before the leaſe fell in, the Corporation gave notice to the truſtees that they muſt not expect a renewal of the leaſe, becauſe they had determined to leaſe it to *Roland* and *John Priddey*, who intended to convert the chapel into a play-houſe. The truſtees of the chapel, ſeeing what was preparing for them, thought it right to be ready for what was coming, and bought two or three houſes in Mealcheapen Street, the capital for which they had laid by. In 1763 they were prepared to leave. One of the truſtees met Alderman *Johnson* of that day, and the Alderman ſaid, "Well, what are you going to do about the chapel, as you are going to be turned out?" "Oh, we expected it, and are prepared." "Why you are not going to have another chapel?" "Yes, we have bought ſome houſes in Mealcheapen Street." "Are you going to build a chapel there?" "Yes." "Why that is next door to my houſe! [This was the houſe which is now the Shades tavern.] You can't have a chapel next door to my houſe."

This discovery at once reversed the proceedings of the Corporation, and the lease of the old premises was granted to the trustees again. It was thought better to forego the play-house than to have the chapel in Mealcheapen Street.

At the risk of being considered tedious we must now retrace our steps, in order to introduce a document which professes to give the history of this society of Christians from its first formation up till our own times. The reason why it was not inserted at the outset was the desire of the author to furnish as much of the general history of the commencement of nonconformity as was necessary to a correct understanding of the subject, that the position and circumstances of an infant church might be the more readily appreciated.

The following history of the Church at Angel Street, *Worcester*, was written by Mr. *Samuel Blackwell* (1841) ---

"The present existence of dissenting congregations being an extension of the great principles of the Reformation, it may not be thought improper to commence an account of the present congregation assembling in Angel Street, *Worcester*, by observing that in all probability the germ of it arose from the preaching of the celebrated *Latimer*, who was Bishop of the diocese in the time of *Henry VIII.* The seed sown by him was doubtless watered by the martyr *Hooper*, who in

the reign of *Mary* was ſo cruelly put to death at *Glouceſter*. In the reign of *Charles I* ſome rich individuals in *London* had engaged to raiſe a fund for buying the advowſons of church livings, and had among others purchased the living of All Saints, in *Worceſter;* but this being, by the powers that then were, declared illegal, the living became veſted in the crown, in the gift of which it has ever ſince continued. In this pariſh and the adjoining one of St. *Andrew* many eminent clothiers (at that time the ſtaple trade of *Worceſter*) reſided; they were probably at that time denominated Puritans, and perhaps afterwards Preſbyterians. It was in the year 1638 that the celebrated *Richard Baxter* determined to devote himſelf to the work of the miniſtry. At that time he reſided in *Dudley*, and going at the time of ordination with Mr. *Richard Foley* and *James Berry* to *Worceſter*, was ordained by the Biſhop, and received a licenſe to teach a ſchool, for which he ſubſcribed as then required. He returned to *Dudley*, and preached his firſt ſermon in the upper pariſh church. Soon after this he began the ſtudy of conformity, removed from *Dudley* to *Bridgnorth*, and was an aſſiſtant to Mr. *Mad*—— for about three quarters of a year, when the town of *Kidderminſter* having exhibited articles againſt the vicar, Mr. *Danſe*, the matter was compounded by his (the vicar) agreeing that inſtead of his preſent curate he ſhould allow 60*l.* per annum to any preacher whom fourteen perſons then nominated ſhould chooſe. To perform this he gave his bond for 500*l.* *Baxter*, after one day's ſervice, was by theſe fourteen unanimouſly choſen, and removed from *Bridgnorth* to

Kidderminſter, where he was much encouraged by the ſucceſs of his labours, but the ignorant multitude much embarraſſed him. Parliament having ſent down an order for the demoliſhing of images in churches or on croſſes in churchyards, *Baxter* left the churchwarden to do what he thought good; and he having ſet up a ladder to take down a crucifix from the croſs in the churchyard, the mob raiſed ſuch a riot that both Mr. *Baxter's* life and the churchwarden's were in great danger. In this fury of the rabble he was adviſed to withdraw awhile from home, and went to *Glouceſter;* he writes---'As I paſſed through a corner of the ſurbubs of *Worceſter* a cry was raiſed 'Down with the Roundheads,' and I was glad to ſpur on and be gone; but when I came to *Glouceſter* I found a civil, courteous, and religious people, as different from *Worceſter* as if they had lived under another government.' He ſtayed at *Glouceſter* for a month, and then his friends came to him from *Kidderminſter* to fetch him home, left it ſhould be ſuppoſed he was againſt the King. The Civil War ſoon after began, and the fury of the people was ſo hot that he withdrew again and joined a party of the Earl of *Eſſex's* army, who were ſent to block up the Lord *Byron* in *Worceſter*. This produced the firſt engagement at *Powick* Bridge, in which the *Eſſex* party were defeated and returned to *Perſhore;* but the whole army returned next day to *Worceſter*. This army had many excellent miniſters as chaplains to the ſeveral regiments, among whom was Mr. *Moore*, chaplain to the Lord *Wharton*, and he afterwards became the Independent preacher at the College.

"The Civil War proceeding, occaſioned *Baxter's* removal to *Coventry*, where he lived as chaplain to the garriſon two years in quietneſs. He left *Coventry* ſoon after the battle of *Naſeby*, and became chaplain to Colonel *Whalley's* regiment till the end of the ſiege of *Worceſter* in 1646. He writes---'By this time Colonel *Whalley*, though *Cromwell's* kinſman, and commander of the truſted regiment, became odious at the head quarters for my ſake; and when he had brought the city to the neceſſity of ſurrendering, two or three days before the ſurrender, Colonel *Rainſborough* was ſent from *Oxford* to command in chief, that he might be governor there and gratify the ſectarians, and ſettle the city and country in their way; but he proſpered no further than in the city itſelf (a place which deſerved ſuch a judgment), but the county was kept free from the infection.'

"After the King's death, Parliament ordered the engagement to be true and faithful to the Commonwealth, without King or Houſe of Lords. *Baxter* had before objected to the covenant, and kept the town and pariſh of *Kidderminſter*, and moſt of *Worceſter* beſides, from taking it, by preventing miniſters from offering the engagement in any congregation to the people, except in *Worceſter* city, where he ſays---'I had no great intereſt, and knew not what they did.' During this time of confuſion he had abundant encouragement in the lectures he preached at *Worceſter*, *Cleobury*, *Dudley*, and *Shiffnal:* the churches were full, windows and leads crowded like any *London* congregation. He ſtates--'At *Kidderminſter* our unity and con-

cord was a great advantage to us; we had no private church, though we had private meetings; we had not paſtor againſt paſtor, nor Chriſtian againſt Chriſtian. At *Bewdley* there was a church of Anabaptiſts; at *Worceſter* the Independents gathered theirs, but we were of one mind and mouth and way.' The Independents of *Worceſter* had their place of worſhip in the Cathedral; Mr. *Simon Moore* was one of the preachers, and prevented *Baxter* from preaching an aſſize ſermon before the Judges becauſe he preached againſt the State.

"*Cromwell* being dead, the counties, cities, and corporations ſent up their congratulations; but none in *Worceſterſhire*, ſave the Independents, meddled in it. *Baxter* names three of them, as being all very honeſt, ſober, and moderate: theſe were Mr. *John Spilſbury*, of *Bromſgrove;* Mr. *Suice (Juice* or *Jewkes)*, of *Worceſter*, and Mr. *Rd. Fincher*, of St. *Nicholas*. During *Richard Cromwell's* time he had been deſired to preach on a day of faſting and prayer by all the miniſters at *Worceſter*, but being hindered, he enlarged and publiſhed the ſermon he had prepared, and entitled it *Gildas Salvianus;* and about the ſame time he became acquainted with Mr. *Clement*, a writer at *Worceſter*---an old man, a forward profeſſor, and of a good converſation, but then perverted to he knew not what. 'His aſſertion to me (writes Mr. *Baxter*) was, that no man is bound to believe in *Chriſt* who does not ſee confirming miracles with his own eyes." Mr. *Thomas Foley*, being High Sheriff, deſired *Baxter* to preach before the Judges, which he did from *Gal.* vi, 16, and enlarged it in a treatiſe entitled

Crucifixion of the World by the Croſs of Chriſt. He preached alſo an aſſize ſermon before Judge *Atkins*, and another before Sergeant *Glyn*. Theſe he printed under the title of *The True Catholic and Catholic Church deſcribed.* By theſe and his diſputations about church government he offended the powers that then were by having dedicated them to *Richard Cromwell.* A Mr. *J. Nanfan*, who had been a Juſtice under *Oliver*, had taken the engagement, and had ſigned orders for the ſequeſtration of ſome of the King's party, being then a Juſtice of the Peace, ſpoke and wrote againſt him in open court. A Mr. *Tomkins*, a young man from *Worceſter*, wrote againſt him on the ſubject.

"From *Richard Cromwell's* abdication till the Reſtoration of *Charles II* nothing occurred worth noticing here. At once all the ſequeſtered clergy then living were reinſtated. *Baxter* left his place at *Kidderminſter;* and Mr. *Moore* and his ſon-in-law being ejected from the Cathedral, of courſe the Independent church worſhipping there was broken up. By the Act of Uniformity, which took place in 1662, Mr. *Baker* of St. *Andrew's* and Mr. *Fincher* of St. *Nicholas'* were ejected, as was alſo Mr. *Badland* from *Willenhall* in *Staffordſhire.* He was of a *Worceſter* family, and the name of *Badland* occurs in the charter of *James I.* He muſt have returned to *Worceſter* in 1663, for at his death in 1698 he had been a preacher of the Goſpel in *Worceſter* for thirty-five years. It ſeems that owing to the unſettled ſtate of the times it was not till *James II* had iſſued his declaration for liberty that a congregation in *Worceſter* was regularly organiſed. The

firſt church book is dated 1687. Mr. *Badland* had for an aſſiſtant a Mr. *Hand*, who had been ordained at *Oldbury* along with Mr. *Reynolds*, Mr. *Warren*, and Mr. *Bennet*. Mr. *Hand* continued aſſiſtant to Mr. *Badland* till Mr. *Blackmore*, who afterwards ſucceeded as paſtor, became aſſiſtant during the remainder of Mr. *Badland's* life.

"The Reſtoration of *Charles II* having driven *Baxter* from *Worceſterſhire*, of courſe his connection with the county and city ceaſed. His occaſional ſervices had doubtleſs been eſteemed by thoſe who conſtituted Mr. *Badland's* congregation. The annexed document, evidently drawn up originally by *Baxter* as a ground on which Epiſcopalians, Preſbyterians, and Independents, might agree to act, was ſubmitted for its adoption, and was ſigned in 1687. From this time the church may be properly conſidered as Congregational."

The document alluded to above is a little volume, with parchment covers, containing the original declaration or manifeſto of this congregation, in MS. of that date, of which the following is a copy:

"1687.

"The record of a p'ticular church of *Chriſt* at *Worceſter*, conſiſting of paſtor and people united in ye Chriſtian profeſſion and covenant following:

"We do beleive yt there is one only *God*, the Father, infinite in being, wiſedom, goodneſſe, and power, ye maker, p'ſerver, and diſpoſer

of all things, and ye moſt juſt and mercifull Lord of all. Wee beleive yt mankind being fallen by ſin from *God* and happineſſe, under ye wrath of *God*, ye curſe of His law, and ye power of ye divell, *God* ſo loved ye world yt He gave His only Son to be their redemer, who being *God*, and one with ye Father, did take to Him our nature, and became man, being conceived of ye *Holy Ghoſt* in ye Virgin *Mary*, and borne of her, and named *Jeſus Chriſt:* And having lived on earth without ſin, and wrought many miracles for a witneſſe of His truth, He gave up Himſelfe a ſacrifice for o'r ſins and a ranſome for us, in ſuffering death on ye croſſe: And being buried, He roſe again ye third day, and afterwards aſcended into heaven, where He is Lord of all in glory with ye Father: And having ordained yt all yt truly repent and believe in Him and love Him above all things, and ſincerely obey Him, and yt to ye death, ſhall be ſaved, and they yt will not ſhall be damned, and comanded His miniſters to pr'ch ye Goſpell to ye world: He will come againe and raiſe ye bodies of all men from ye dead, and will get all ye world before Him to be judged according to what they have done in ye body: and He will adjudge ye righteous to life everlaſting, and ye reſt to everlaſting puniſhment, wch ſhall be executed accordingly.

"We believe yt *God* ye Holy Ghoſt, ye Spirit of ye Father and ye Son, was ſent from ye Father by ye Son, to inſpire and guide ye prophets and apoſtles yt they might fully reveal ye doctrine of *Chriſt:* and by multitude of evident miracles and wonderfull gifts to be ye great witneſſe of *Chriſt*, and of ye truth of His holy word: and to dwell

and work in all yt are drawen to beleive, yt being firſt joyned to *Chriſt* their head, and into one church wch is His body, and ſo pardoned, and made ye ſons of *God*, they may be a peculiar people ſanctified to *Chriſt* and may mortify ye fleſh and overcome ye world and ye devill: and being zealous of good works, may ſerve *God* in holineſſe and may live in ye ſpeciall love and comunion of ye ſaints and in hope of *Chriſt's* coming and of everlaſting life.

"We do heartily take this one *God* for o'r only *God*, and o'r cheif good, and this *Jeſus Chriſt* for our only Lord, Redemer, and Saviour, and this *Holy Ghoſt* for o'r ſanctifier, and ye doctrine by him revealed and ſealed by His miracles, and now contained in ye *Holy Scriptures*, we do take for ye law of *God* and ye rule of o'r faith and life. And, repenting unfeignedly of o'r ſins, we do reſolve through ye grace of *God* ſincerely to obey Him, both in holineſſe to *God* and righteouſneſſe to men, and in ſpeciall love to ye ſaints and comunion with them, againſt all ye temptations of ye devill, ye world, and o'r owne fleſh, and this to ye death.

"*Thomas Badland*, paſtour

"*William Hodges*
Mrs. *Al'e Wolly*
Mrs. *Alſe Bearcroſt*
Mrs. *Wildy*
Elizab. Badland
Mrs. *Mary Cook*
Mr. *Wm. Chetle*
Mr. *Thos. Smith*
Mr. *John Beard* and his wife
Mrs. *Sarah Chetle*
Mrs. *Dorothy Wooly*
Mrs. *Eliz. Stirmy*
Margaret Lokier
Jene Hankins
Eliza Browne

Mr. *Jos. Richards* and his wife *Elinor*
Henry ———
Richard Wheeler and *An* his wif
Eliz. Walker
Katherin Blackwey
Mrs. *Sarah Chetle* daught. to Mr. *Wm. Chetle*
Bridget Smith
Mrs. *Mary Walton*
Mrs. *Mary Longmore*
Mrs. *Eliz. Dolman*
Mrs. *Abigall Higgins*
Margery Tayler
Ann Owen
Ciſely Fincher
Elizab. Luggon
Margery Wells
Joſeph Fincher
John Kent
Mrs. *Ann Harris* wife to Mr. *Ric. Harris*
Mr. *John Evans* and his wife *Anne.*"

After the above declaration, and the ſignatures attached thereto, there are many pages of names of members admitted, entered at different times, without date, till the year 1700, and among theſe names are many ſtill extant in the city of *Worceſter*. Some of the ſignatures are written by proxy, and a mark attached; but theſe marks are of all ſhapes and forms except the croſs---a ſign believed by our Puritanical forefathers to be more an emblem of the great beaſt than of Chriſtianity. Liſts of admiſſions to membership occur in this little book up to about the middle of the laſt century only, and I find that ſome of the books of the ſociety from about that date were loſt or deſtroyed during an unfortunate Chancery ſuit early in the preſent century. A looſe memorandum encloſed in the declaration book ſtates as follows :

"The regiſter of baptiſms of the correſponding dates with the regiſtry of the admiſſion of members at the commencement of this book has been taken out of this end, put into a ſtiff paper cover, and is depoſited (with all the baptiſmal regiſters belonging to Angel Street ſociety of a ſubſequent date) in the office of the Regiſtrar General, *London*.

"*G. Redford*, D.D., LL.D., Paſtor.

Rd. Evans,
Stephen Burden,
Robt. Newman,
Chas. Martin,
} Deacons."

But now to reſume Mr. *Samuel Blackwell's* MS. hiſtory:

"The number of communicants," ſays he, "added in Mr. *Badland's* hand-writing is forty. After 1687 to February 22 is 120. The place of worſhip was at the lower end of Fiſh Street, where the front part of the porcelain manufactory* now ſtands, but no part of the old building now remains. It had been lighted up at night by three ſmall braſs chandeliers, which, with ſome iron candleſticks to ſtick in the pillars and ſome of the wainſcoat of the pews, were made uſe of in the preſent meeting-houſe. Mr. *Badland* died in 1698, and was buried in the chancel of old St. *Martin's* church; and when that church was pulled down in 1768, the marble tablet which recorded his name was, with the reſt of the building materials, thrown careleſſly

* Now Meſſrs. *Dent* and Co.'s glove manufactory, Warmſtry Slip.

aſide, and broken in many fragments; theſe were diſcovered and purchaſed by a truſtee of the chapel, and, as the record ſaid, 'the tablet was repaired at the expenſe of the congregation and erected in the veſtibule of Angel Street chapel, where we truſt it will long remain.'

"The Rev. *Chewning Blackmore* ſucceeded Mr. *Badland* as paſtor, Mr. *Hand* for ſome time continuing his aſſiſtant. After Mr. *Hand's* death, Mr. *John Butler*, at that time a celebrated printer in *Worceſter*, was employed to invite Mr. *John Stokes*, who then reſided with his father in *Dudley*, to become aſſiſtant to Mr. *Blackmore*. He accepted the invitation, and after ſome time he married *Penelope Hand*, commenced as ſchool-maſter, and kept his ſchool in the preſent chapel, till from injuries done to the building he was obliged to remove the ſchool elſewhere. He never would be ordained, but continued to aſſiſt Mr. *Blackmore* and others till an unfortunate diſagreement cauſed him to remove from *Worceſter*. His refuſing ordination was the reaſon that prevented him from becoming paſtor. He lived to the very advanced age of eighty-ſix, and died at his ſon's home, at *The Rhyd*, now the ſeat of the *Lechmeres*.

"The religious ſervices were continued as uſual, with perhaps an annual ſervice after the Revolution, in 1689, on the 5th of November. The place of worſhip now in Angel Street was built in Mr. *Blackmore's* time, in 1708, and ſome time between that date and 1722 was regiſtered at the quarter ſeſſions as a place of worſhip for the Preſbyterians. In the riot that took place about the commencement of the reign of *George I*,

when many meeting-houſes were deſtroyed, it was conſidered in ſo much danger that for ſome weeks a watch was kept for its preſervation. Mr. *Blackmore* married a lady of the name of *Abigail Higgins*, whoſe name occurs in Mr. *Badland's* liſt of church members. He built the back part of the laſt north-eaſt houſe in Foregate Street, furniſhed his parlour with a numerous collection of nonconformiſt miniſters [portraits, of courſe], which was conſidered quite a curioſity and as ſuch frequently viſited by Sir *C. Trubſhaw Withers*. Mr. *Blackmore* died July 15, 1737, and was buried in St. *Andrew's* church, where a monument to his memory remains. He left a ſum of money for the diſtribution of *Bibles* and for preaching two ſermons annually to young people on the 15th of July and on New Year's Day; the ſubjects to be the danger of delay in religion, and on the power and grace of *Chriſt*. A ſermon on the 5th of November was probably added ſoon after the Revolution of 1688. Two hundred and fifty members were added in his time.

"Rev. *Francis Spilſbury*, then of *Kidderminſter*, ſucceeded Mr. *Blackmore* as paſtor, Mr. *Stokes* continuing aſſiſtant. The religious ſervices were continued as uſual, but the ſubſcription to the church profeſſion and covenant was diſcontinued. Mr. *Spilſbury* was much reſpected, but receiving an invitation to the congregation at Salter's Hill, *London*, he ſoon removed thither. He kept up his connection with *Worceſter* by an annual viſit, at which time he preached and conducted a ſeaſon of public worſhip.

"The Rev. *Francis Blackmore*, ſon of the late *C. Blackmore*, and his brother, *Edward Chewning*

Blackmore, were received with others into communion June 15, 1721. He had been ordained to ſucceed Mr. *H*—— at *Eveſham*, and on the removal of Mr. *Spilſbury* he was invited to ſucceed him as paſtor, Mr. *Stokes* continuing aſſiſtant. This connection, too, ſoon became ſo very unfortunate that the elders and managers forcibly expelled Mr. *Blackmore*, who on a Lord's Day morning, finding the pulpit occupied by Mr. *Adams* of *Bewdley*, on entering the chapel exclaimed---'A pretty piece of work, truly, and Mr. —— at the head of it!' He left the place inſtantly, and never entered it afterwards, although he never reſigned, nor would give up his claim to be paſtor as long as he lived. He reſided in Foregate Street till his death in 1760, and was buried in St. *Andrew's* church. Mr. *Stokes* immediately withdrew from *Worceſter*, and became miniſter to a ſmall congregation at *Ledbury*, but for ſome years before his death reſided in *Worceſter* or its vicinity till he removed to the houſe appointed for all living. Many families left the congregation in conſequence of the above quarrel.

"During Mr. *Francis Blackmore's* time ſerious diſagreements had ariſen between the managers of the congregation and the Corporation. The ground upon which the preſent building ſtands was the property of Mr. *Timothy Colles*, whoſe name appears in the regiſter of members February 18, 1703. The uſual renewable leaſe from the Corporation for forty-one years was made to him of a garden with the 'Blanquet' or 'Banquetting-houſe' thereon, in 1708, the year in which the chapel was erected. This leaſe was

again renewed to the ſame *Timothy Colles* and under the ſame deſcription in 1722; which leaſe was never renewed, and of courſe expired in 1763. The diſagreement above alluded to having increaſed, the preſent building and premiſes were ſold to *Rowland Priddy* and *Jos. Priddy* for the underſtood and avowed purpoſe of converting the preſent building into a play-houſe, and the Corporation executed a leaſe, dated June 2, 1740, to thoſe perſons for the uſual term of forty-one years, but to commence from Michaelmas, 1763, the time the leaſe was to expire. To prevent this iſſue, two leading gentlemen of the congregation, *Richard Broad* and *Philip Fincher*, Eſq., of *Shell*, purchaſed, with property belonging to the congregation, freehold premiſes in Mealcheapen Street, intending to take down and remove all the building except the 'Banquetting-houſe,' and leave the ground as a garden, juſt as it was before 1763; intending to build another meeting houſe on the freehold property in Mealcheapen Street. This becoming probably known, proved ſo offenſive to the late Alderman *Johnſon*, whoſe dwelling-houſe adjoined the freehold, and who did not like a Preſbyterian meeting at his next door, that a final arrangement was made that the premiſes ſhould be held under the leaſe to the *Priddys* for the firſt fourteen years of their renewable leaſe, that it ſhould be afterwards renewed for the congregation at a fine of 31*l.* 10*s.* and a nominal rent of 2*s.* and capons. It was conſequently ſo held till a new leaſe was granted for forty-one years, renewable as uſual every fourteen years, from Michaelmas, 1777, to fifteen perſons therein named, upon the reſerved rent, uſual

covenants, and the renewable fine of 31*l.* 10*s.* This was the firſt leaſe ever granted to truſtees; and of theſe fifteen perſons the late Mr. *T. Hodges* was the indiſputable ſurvivor. The leaſe has ever ſince been regularly renewed, under the ſame deſcription and in the ſame terms, in the years 1791, 1805, 1819, and 1833. The preſent truſtees have now (1841) conſented to the propoſed terms for enfranchiſing the ſame, under the late Municipal Reform Act. During Mr. *Blackmore's* time alſo Mrs. *Sarah Chi*—— left a leaſehold houſe in Foregate Street for the dwelling of the miniſter; it has, however, been long ſince ſold.

"Soon after the lamentable diſagreement referred to, the Rev. *Jos. Carpenter*, of *Warwick*, became the paſtor. The old man wondered they ſhould invite him, but ſaid if they grew tired, and wiſhed to change, they would not have ſo much trouble in getting rid of him. He was much eſteemed, and reſided in the houſe left for the miniſter in 1760.

"The Rev. *John Allen*, M.D. (?), of *London*, ſucceeded. He viſited *London* too frequently and too long continued, and took different ſides with his congregation in election matters; ſo the connection became uncomfortable. He took leave, with a concluding ſermon from *Jeremiah* xx, 9: 'I was weary with forbearance and I could not ſtay.' A handſome preſent was made to him on leaving, which he accepted without ſaying 'Thank you.' He was paſtor till 1764.

"Rev. *Thomas Urwick*, whoſe education commenced under Dr. *Doddridge*, and finiſhed at *Glaſgow*, and who had been aſſiſtant miniſter for

ten years, ſucceeded. At his ordination the miniſters employed were Mr. *Fawcett* of *Kidderminſter*, Mr. *Wyld* of Carr's Lane, *Birmingham*, Mr. *Spilſbury* of *London*, Mr. *Stokes* of *Ledbury*, and others. In 1775 he reſigned, ſettled at *Clapham*, and died there in 1807."

Mr. *Blackwell's* document here becomes diſcurſive, and as I ſhall have occaſion to interweave the narrative written by him with particulars derived from other ſources, his MS. muſt now be conſidered at an end ſo far as continuous quotation is concerned.

On the reſignation of Mr. *Urwick*, in 1775, ſeveral miniſters were applied to, but all declined the invitation, until Mr. *Belſham* was choſen. This gentleman afterwards becoming notorious as the leader of the Socinian party, a brief notice of his connection with *Worceſter* may be deſirable. When Mr. *Belſham* was ordained here, in 1778, I find from the truſtees' book that "a genteel dinner for about thirty" was ordered to be provided by Mr. *Yardley*, for the miniſters and others attending the ordination; they were to ſleep at the houſes of the members and ſubſcribers to the ſociety, or beds were to be provided at the Star and Garter, where alſo ſtables were engaged for their horſes; likewiſe they were to make uſe of Mr. *Yardley's* houſe, known as "*Tom's* Coffee-houſe," to be at when they pleaſed, and Mr.

Yardley to provide a ſupper for thoſe who choſe to ſup. "*Tom's* Coffee-houſe" was ſituate nearly oppoſite the Star and Garter hotel; at the back of the coffee-houſe was an aſſembly room and a bowling green. The premiſes are now occupied by Mr. Alderman *Firkins*, glover, &c. It appears that ſome time previous to Mr. *Belſham's* ſettlement here an abortive attempt was made to commence a ſeparate intereſt or congregation in the city, to be called Independent (the Angel Street ſociety being ſtill denominated Preſbyterian), but Mr. *Blackwell* ſays---"Of the perſons who firſt began it the leaſt ſaid the better," and in obedience to this hint I have ſought no further to pry into their hiſtory. Their chapel or conventicle was ſituated on the ſouth ſide of Pump Street, and was licenſed and regiſtered in the Archdeacon's court September 8th, 1778, and opened on the following September 17th. Mr. *Lewis* (ſubſequently of *Wootton-under-Edge*) was miniſter there for ſome time, but after a few years it was abandoned (in 1795), and the building or ground on which it ſtood is now occupied by the Weſleyan chapel. Mr. *Belſham* evidently anticipated a great acceſſion to his Preſbyterian congregation, as he called them, and being preſent when a ſurvey was made of the galleries, to aſcertain if they were ſufficient to ſupport ſuch a multitude as were ſuppoſed would be aſſembled

(Mr. *Blackwell* notes), "took occaſion to obſerve that the canopy of the ſound-board over the pulpit was ſurmounted by the figure of a human heart, flaming with devotion and winged with love." Mr. *Blackwell* does not ſtate whether this ſymbol was approved or not by the new preacher, but he remarks that "this very appropriate emblem of what ſhould be the character of the miniſter has long been deſtroyed." Everything betokened proſperity when Mr. *Belſham* firſt connected himſelf with the *Worceſter* Independents: his early ſervices ſeem to have been accounted by his congregation correct and orthodox, and his ſermons were in the ſtyle of the old Preſbyterians. "True, they were conſidered dull and tireſome on account of their extreme length (his prayers being eſpecially weariſome), yet his diſcourſes were frequently on the great ſubject of mediation and were decidedly evangelical, the preacher not having then imbibed, or at all events given expreſſion to, the ſtrong opinions which ſubſequently rendered his name notorious as a Socinian." Moreover he greatly improved the diſcipline of the ſociety; ſpecial prayer meetings were commenced by him, and were firſt held in a large upper ſeat at the ſouth end of the eaſt gallery, then known as the "old praying ſeat;" afterwards the veſtry was uſed for the purpoſe. The City Library, which had

been begun by a few perſons of the congregation, and kept in a room in Angel Street, was removed, when the veſtry was built, to the room over it, where it continued till the preſent library in Pierpoint Street was erected. Mr. *Belſham* could not have been in *Worceſter* much more than three years when he communicated his determination to accept the charge of the academy at *Daventry*, and his removal thither took place in 1781.

The Rev. *J. Gummer*, of *Hereford*, ſucceeded him in the ſame year, being recommended by the celebrated *Job Orton*, the pupil, friend, and biographer of *Doddridge*. The miniſter's houſe in Foregate Street belonging to the Independents having been ſold, Mr. *Gummer* at firſt reſided in a part of what is now the Working Man's Inſtitute (late *Simpſon's* and then *Colville's* academy in Silver Street), till a parſonage houſe adjoining the chapel was built for him. The ſociety of Independents appears to have been much increaſed during his miniſtry, towards the cloſe of which however, in 1791, great diſſenſions had ariſen among them, and their affairs were evidently in a critical ſtate, many members having withdrawn from the ſociety. He reſigned in that year, and removed into *Wiltſhire*.

Mr. *Gummer's* ſucceſſor, in the ſame year, was the Rev. *G. Oſborn*, from *Weſt Bromwich*. He

was born at *Cork*, in 1757, and in early youth was placed under the care of a clergyman there, who beſtowed much attention upon his pupil. Hearing one of Mr. *Whitfield's* ſtirring ſermons confirmed a previous bias in his mind to educate himſelf for the miniſtry, for which his intellectual talents alſo ſeemed to befit him. At length he embarked for *England*, ſtudied at the academy at *Daventry*, and returned to *Ireland* to exerciſe his miniſterial labours in that country, but ſubſequently again proceeded to *England*, where he married, in March, 1785, the daughter of *John* and *Frances Hartley*, of Fleet Street. He then removed to *Weſt Bromwich*, where he took charge of a congregation, eſtabliſhed Sunday ſchools and a lying-in charity, and remained there for ſix years, when he was invited to *Worceſter*. Mr. *Oſborn* kept a ſchool here and continued paſtor till his death, in 1812. His peculiar views as a Baptiſt muſt have led to ſome inconvenience between him and his congregation in regard to ceremonial if not to diſcipline; it therefore ſpeaks well for the Chriſtian charity and forbearance both of paſtor and people that under ſuch circumſtances their connection ſhould have continued for the lengthened period of twenty-one years. Mr. *Oſborn* was, however, eminently a Chriſtian man, and his practical uſefulneſs is vouched for by the fact that under his auſpices

the firſt Sunday ſchool in this city (although a previous attempt ſeems to have been made at St. *Nicholas'* church) was eſtabliſhed in connection with Angel Street chapel, in the year 1797---the boys' ſchool in that year, and the girls' in 1798; ſince which time the ſchools have been maintained and greatly increaſed, and the example followed by every congregation both of the Eſtabliſhed Church and of diſſenters. I have before me a printed ſermon, preached by Mr. *Oſborn* (and kindly lent me by his daughter, Miſs *Oſborn*, bookſeller, of the Croſs, *Worceſter*), preached at Angel Street chapel on the 9th of November, 1800, for the benefit of theſe Sunday ſchools. The ſubject of the ſermon is *Moral Charity;* and it is a curious feature in the hiſtory of a time ſo recent as to be within the recollection of the exiſting generation, that the principal object of this ſermon was to confute the popular ſlander that Sunday ſchools were believed to be "ſeminaries of ſedition and atheiſm, and nurſeries of indolence, pride, and diſaffection"---to ſhow that they were not calculated to foſter the intereſt of a party, and neither intended nor uſed as means of levying contributions for the ſupport of erroneous conventicles. "We have no ſecret rules," ſays the advocate for Sunday training; "our place of meeting, our mode of teaching, and our progreſs in utility are all open---all avowed---all

ſoliciting the vigilant inſpection both of friends and enemies." He ſays, in his addreſs accompanying the ſermon---

"Soon after coming to reſide in this city, I was led to notice multitudes of poor, idle, miſerable-looking children, ſauntering and begging about the ſtreets---an evil of conſiderable growth, yet not always within the power of the magiſtrates to remedy. It ſtruck me that Sunday ſchools might help to prevent ſuch a nuiſance. I had tried the experiment in *Staffordſhire*, and found it anſwer much to my wiſh. As it is the duty of every citizen to do his beſt for the public good, and eſpecially of every Chriſtian miniſter to exert himſelf for the good of ſouls, I had the honour and happineſs to propoſe the formation of an Evangelic Society with this view. Under the patronage of this inſtitution the Goſpel has been preached in the adjacent villages, and after duly conſidering the moſt probable means of ſucceſs, we were induced to commence a Sunday ſchool for boys in the city of *Worceſter*, Auguſt 20th, 1797. I preached for their benefit May 27th, 1798, and through the great encouragement then afforded we were enabled to eſtabliſh another ſchool, for girls, for both of which I preached to a very numerous congregation, Auguſt 25th, 1799. In the next year the number of ſcholars increaſed much, and I preached for their common benefit on Sunday, November 9th, 1800. Our encouragement then was ſo conſiderable that we were enabled to furniſh the boys with hats and the girls with bonnets, the

viſitors gratuitouſly aſſiſting the girls with tippets. And this year (1801) I have been enabled to plead the cauſe of 130 poor children, who have been much aſſiſted by the ſteady and generous zeal of our friends and the public, and who are now preſented with a comfortable article of dreſs each, and the moſt deſerving of whom are inſtructed in writing, &c., on the week-day evenings. I can aſſert with truth and confidence that theſe are not either ſeditious or atheiſtic ſeminaries: they are freely taught to read and believe the *Bible;* they are regularly brought twice on the Lord's Day to public worſhip; they are alſo inſtructed to repeat hymns and to learn the catechiſms of *Watts* and of the orthodox aſſembly of divines, in which alſo they are examined publicly by the miniſter every month. Thus, while our grand object is to reſcue ſouls from wretchedneſs, we deſire to teach them all to act juſtly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with *God*, believing as we aſſuredly do that we are all haſtening to an eternity of joy or woe. Since the foregoing ſheets went to preſs, it has afforded the author and his friends great pleaſure to underſtand that efforts are now making by the clergy of the Eſtabliſhment in this city, under the ſpecial direction of their preſent venerable Biſhop, *to revive the Sunday ſchool in St. Nicholas' pariſh*, and to increaſe the number and extend the advantages of ſuch charitable inſtitutions through the town. May all their Chriſtian labours be wiſely and liberally directed, and may every friend of truth and love aſſiſt, and enjoy the peaceful fruits."

As a preacher Mr. *Oſborn* ſeems to have been conſpicuous, and would have attained to ſome eminence as a pulpit orator had health permitted. His ſcholaſtic attainments and general knowledge alſo peculiarly qualified him for the office of tutor. He died at the parſonage houſe adjoining the chapel on November 10th, 1812, aged fifty-four, and was interred in the burial ground adjoining the chapel, leaving behind him a widow, one ſon, and four daughters. He was the author of publiſhed ſermons on *Chriſtianity atteſted and explained by Prophecy; Evangelic Faith and Union; Moral Charity;* and *Devout Loyalty.*

The Rev. *D. Fleming*, of *Cork*, became paſtor of Angel Street chapel in 1814, but reſigned in the following year, and was ſucceeded by

Mr. (now the Rev. Dr.) *Vaughan.* This gentleman, who was for ſome years Preſident of *Lancaſhire* College, and an author and preacher of conſiderable mark, received a collegiate education at *Glaſgow*, and ſtudied theology under the Rev. Mr. *Thorpe*, of *Briſtol*, who was well known for his attainments. He commenced his paſtorate at *Worceſter* in 1819, and reſigned February 20th, 1825, when he went to *Kenſington*, and remained there till he became Preſident of the *Lancaſhire* College.

I have had the privilege of liſtening to ſeveral of the Rev. Dr's. heart-ſtirring addreſſes, and

although now advancing in years he moſt forcibly illuſtrates the known truth that the waning of intellectual power is not neceſſarily coincident with declining days. As an orator, Dr. *Vaughan* has long ago acquired the *ars celare artem*---the power of concealing beneath great eaſe, ſimplicity, grace, and quiet dignity of expreſſion, the working of manifold logical proceſſes, the elimination of powerful argument, and an amplitude of intellectual riches culled from a wide and varied field of reſearch---a power which he wields with grandeur of conception, ſublimity of thought, and potency of application. Unfortunately I have only taken brief notes of but two of his ſermons delivered during his occaſional viſits to *Worceſter*, and the firſt was preached on a Sunday ſoon after the opening of the preſent new chapel; text, "But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandiſe;" *Matthew* xxii, 5. The following is a very brief abſtract of this diſcourſe:

The people who had been invited to the marriage feaſt made light of it. That was a neglect or contempt of the invitation---a ſin ſtill moſt common in our own day. Obſerve, the deſpiſers were not the declared enemies of *God:* they would have ſhrunk from the imputation of being infidels or atheiſts; they had ſimply neglected to reſpond to His call. "Religion (ſaid

they) might be a good thing for thoſe who had a diſpoſition for it, but we have demands on our time which will admit of nothing elſe." Expedients were always at hand, whereby ſuch men ſought to eſcape the claims of the Goſpel, while occupying themſelves with the purſuits and pleaſures of life. The preacher undertook to prove this conduct to be---firſt, moſt unreaſonable; next, as deeply criminal; and laſtly, if perſevered in, as certain to iſſue in ſomething unſpeakably diſaſtrous. As to its being unreaſonable: let it not be ſuppoſed that religion prevented a proper attention to the concerns of this life; by no means: a man who took a farm, or who became a merchant, ſhould be prepared to exerciſe his utmoſt ſkill and diligence in rendering his labours productive. If not ſo prepared, he had no right to become the one or the other, for it was an apoſtolic injunction, "Not ſlothful in buſineſs"---but at the ſame time "fearing the *Lord*." He who noted with what foreſight and fatherly care and wondrous ſkill *God* provided for the inferior animals, adapting them, their food, covering, and all other circumſtances, to the conditions by which they found themſelves ſurrounded, could never miſtruſt His providence toward ſo ſuperior a being as man. True, man had reaſon given him, to more than compenſate for inſtinct; but if the exerciſe of his reaſon terminated in the production of food, clothing, and a habitation, in what was he ſuperior to the brute? But it might be ſaid that man was capable of enjoyment in literature, ſcience, and art. True again, but all that terminated in the earthly and ſenſuous, and had no reference to the higher object for

which man's faculties had been awarded to him. Once more, it might be ſaid that the human family were capable of a moral ſenſe of right and wrong---that they could diſtinguiſh between the true and the falſe, and were bound to act on that baſis towards their fellow creatures. Yes, but that was not all. Had *God* made this beautiful earth, ſo elaborately carpeted, ſo pregnant in air, earth, and water, with overwhelming proofs of deſign and benevolence, merely for the uſe of upright farmers and thriving merchants? Were the faculties of man and his perception of the truth and of the diſtinctions between right and wrong---to be exerciſed only in reference to himſelf and worldly matters, and not towards his Maker? Suppoſe ſuch a perſon admitted to the realms of the bleſſed, what a wide waſte to all eternity would heaven prove to him! Next, the deep *criminality* of neglect was to be proved. A man's body was given to him in truſt, and if he committed exceſs in any way his own fleſh cried out that he had wronged *God's* workmanſhip. But what of the ſoul? Was not that a much more precious truſt? The neglect of the ſoul's intereſt, by not accepting the Goſpel of *Chriſt*, was unſpeakably deplorable---a ſelling of a glorious birthright for a mere meſs of pottage. Nor were the conſequences of neglect confined to a man's ſelf: his neglect of religion was an actual preaching to his neighbours that he believed there was nothing in it. Was not ſuch an example injurious? No man ever went to heaven without drawing a train of other ſouls in his company; no one ever deſcended to eternal puniſhment without ſinking others along with him, to be his

terror and his curſe throughout a baleful eternity, heightened by the continual conſciouſneſs that he had led the way thither for many other of his fellow creatures. But the moſt criminal aſpect of this neglect of religion was in its reference to *God*. And here the preacher drew a glowing picture of what this Almighty Being had done for man---his ſubjection of the reſources of nature and of animal life to our uſe, ſuſtenance, and comfort; but above all, His wondrous ſcheme of redemption, to remedy the diſaſtrous effects of the myſterious permiſſion of ſin in the world. Therefore the baſeſt and the moſt criminal of all things was a neglect and a contempt of ſuch a *God*, to whom we owed all our enjoyment of the preſent---all our hopes of future life. The iſſue of ſuch a ſin, if perſevered in, could not fail to be unſpeakably diſaſtrous. A ſoul loſt was not loſt to being but to *God*---a drifted wreck, for ever haunted with ghoſt-like memories of neglected opportunities as well as of unrepented ſin---whoſe imagination and conſcience remained, but only to heighten and deepen the ſenſe of inward wretchedneſs---whoſe paſſions remained, but ſtill to go on from worſe to worſe, reaping only increaſing puniſhment. Oh, while it was called to-day, he exhorted his hearers to fall at the foot of the croſs, and ſeek redemption in the blood of *Chriſt*. Let them not hearken to that ſophiſtry which would have them believe that things would not be ſo bad in the next world as was repreſented, and that *God* was fitting His creatures here for whatever ſtate they would have to appear in hereafter. This theory originated with the father of lies, and had beguiled

many a ſoul into perdition. The Sacred Book which was to be their only guidance had declared that "where the tree falls, there it muſt lie;" and "he that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill." Therefore loſe not a moment, in looking to the Saviour and praying for the influence of the Holy Spirit to lead into all truth and purity of life.

The above is but a ſkeleton of what the eloquent preacher covered with fleſh and filled with glowing life, by his beautiful language and imagery.

When Dr. *Vaughan* reſigned his paſtoral charge into the hands of his ſucceſſor, Dr. *Redford*, he ſcarcely contemplated the poſſibility of his being called upon at the diſtant period of thirty-five years to reoccupy the pulpit at *Worceſter* for the purpoſe of "improving" the lamented deceaſe of that gentleman; yet ſuch was the caſe, as will be hereafter adverted to. But we muſt now haſten on to a record of the Rev. Dr. *Redford*, who for ſo many years occupied a prominent poſition in *Worceſter*, and whoſe remains have been but recently conſigned to the tomb. He was the only ſon of the Rev. *Alexander Redford*, a *Scotch* Preſbyterian, who, coming to *England*, became an Independent, and was for more than half a century the miniſter at *Windſor*. *George Redford* began his ſtudies at *Hoxton* College, and afterwards entered the Univerſity of

Glaſgow, where he gained ſome prizes of diſtinction in his claſſes, and took his M.A. degree, in after life having the honorary degree of LL.D. conferred upon him by the Univerſity. After being ordained he was appointed paſtor of the Independent Church at *Uxbridge*, where he reſided ſeveral years. Although a very young man at this time his preaching attracted much attention, and his congregation embraced both epiſcopalians and nonconformiſts. He had then a commanding perſonal appearance, with an impreſſive manner, much natural eloquence, and a choice of language not generally heard from the diſſenting pulpits of thoſe days; his ſtyle alſo was original and argumentative, while in illuſtration he was felicitous and pungent, and dexterous in the practical application of his theme. He ſoon became the friend of the moſt diſtinguiſhed men of his party, ſuch as Dr. *Pye Smith*, the Rev. *Robert Hall*, *John Foſter*, and the Rev. *W. J. Jay*, of *Bath*, whoſe biographer he afterwards was, in aſſociation with the late Rev. *J. A. James*, alſo his own moſt intimate friend.

In 1825 he was invited to ſucceed the Rev. Dr. *Vaughan* in the miniſtry at Angel Street chapel, in this city, and accepted the invitation. In this wider field of uſefulneſs his vigorous mind ſoon found opportunities of exertion, which

he was not ſlow to improve. In January, 1827, Dr. *Redford* was led into a controverſy, from which, when it came to be generally known that he had taken part in it, he ſubſequently derived great reputation. A public challenge to point out any errors in doctrine or morals of the *Romiſh* Church was accepted by the rev. gentleman, and led to a controverſy in which he diſplayed extraordinary learning and rare argumentative capacity. For a time the letters of "*Horace Bentley*," under which ſignature he wrote, were pretty generally aſcribed to the Rev. Dr. *Hook*, then Dean of *Worceſter*. The controverſy ended in the Papiſt publicly confeſſing himſelf beaten by the ſources of argument agreed upon, viz., the Chriſtian Fathers. It was in connection with this controverſy that the Univerſity of *Glaſgow* conferred upon him the honour of LL.D.; and ſhortly after a ſimilar honorary degree of D.D. was conferred by the Univerſity of *Philadelphia*.

Dr. *Redford* was a great ſupporter of the Literary and Scientific Inſtitution then exiſting in this city; he was among the earlieſt antagoniſts of church-rates and the corn-laws, and was a frequent contributor to the magazines and reviews. During his paſtorate in this city the doctor had the honour of being choſen Preſident of the Congregational Union, and delivered the

cuſtomary ſeries of lectures. Theſe attracted much attention at the time, and were afterwards publiſhed under the title of *Holy Scriptures Verified, or the Divine Authority of the Bible Confirmed*, &c., a work much eulogiſed by literary and biblical critics of the day, and conſtituting, I believe, a maſterly preſentation of all the chief arguments bearing on the ſubject. Dr. *Redford* alſo wrote *The Life of the Rev. John Cooke*, and *The Paſtor's Sketch Book*. He was editor with Dr. *Leifchild* of the *Evangeliſt*, a book for young miniſters, beſides which he publiſhed various ſermons, lectures, eſſays, and addreſſes. He was conſtant and earneſt in pleading the cauſe of the Bible Society, of all miſſionary ſchemes, of the Anti-Slavery Society, and always ready to lend his aid in promoting objects of piety, charity, or benevolence.

In 1855 Dr. *Redford* met with an accident while travelling in *Wales*, by which his hand was much injured. This was followed by the deceaſe of a beloved wife, and the ſhock thus occaſioned ſo far weighed down a highly nervous temperament that he was compelled to reſign his miniſterial duties, to the great regret of his congregation, who expreſſed their high ſenſe of his ſervices by voting him an annuity of 100*l.* for life, and a ſum of more than 1,400*l.* was raiſed for his benefit.

Since his retirement from active life, Dr. *Redford* reſided at *Edgbaſton*, *Birmingham*, occaſionally viſiting *Worceſter*, and ſo lately as the firſt Sunday in March, 1860, he adminiſtered the ordinance of the *Lord's* Supper in Angel Street chapel. His health then began to fail more rapidly, and on the 16th of May following he had an apoplectic ſeizure, and ſank down, exclaiming as he fell, "There is no more death." From this time he lingered in an inſenſible ſtate, without any ſign of pain or ſuffering, until the following Sunday evening, May 20th, when he breathed his laſt, in his ſeventy-fifth year. His remains were interred in the graveyard at the back of Angel Street chapel, on which occaſion the Rev. *T. R. Barker*, tutor of Spring Hill College, *Birmingham*, delivered a moſt impreſſive addreſs, on the words "Bleſſed are the dead that die in the *Lord.*" On the following Sunday alſo the Rev. Dr. *Vaughan* came ſpecially to preach on the ſolemn event. The Rev. gentleman took for his text---*Epheſians* iv, part 12 v.: "For edifying the body of *Chriſt.*"

The duty of the Chriſtian miniſtry (he ſaid) was to edify or build up the church, which was the body of *Chriſt;* and he enlarged upon the obligations under which that congregation lay in having been bleſſed with ſuch a miniſtry. The Chriſtian diſpenſation, he proceeded to ſhow,

was in itſelf unique: there had been previouſly nothing like it in the world; the Pagan prieſthood of the eaſtern world was but a profeſſional thing, for the benefit of a claſs, while the people were left unheeded in ſlavery and ſin; the *Greeks* and *Romans* had ſchools of philoſophy where a ſelect few were taught, as in colleges, and paid for their inſtruction. Even the church of *God* in patriarchal times ſaw nothing like the Chriſtian plan of teaching the people, for the inſtruction derived from their prophets was ſomewhat of a private character, and voluntary and occaſional, rather than the reſult of a ſyſtem. The *Jewiſh* ſynagogue was the neareſt approach to that teaching of the people which was now enjoyed, and the preacher gave an intereſting deſcription of the period of *Jewiſh* hiſtory when ſynagogues were firſt eſtabliſhed. But it was reſerved for *Chriſt* to bring a new light from heaven upon humanity---to introduce a new power in the earth, by preaching the Goſpel to every creature, the poor as well as the rich. Some thought the pulpit had now had its day and was becoming effete, but he earneſtly denied this, for feeble as their miniſtrations might be---and none could feel more deeply their inability always to ſay wiſe things, or to ſpeak the truth in the beſt manner, than the preacher himſelf---yet no doubt the pulpit was an inſtitution of *God*, pregnant with intereſt to the race of man both in this world and in the next; and the people were bound to make a right uſe of that inſtitution. No one could eſcape accountability by keeping himſelf beyond the range of the preacher's voice: there was *God's* meſſage delivered, and he who

refuſed to hear it muſt be everlaſtingly imperilled by his contempt. Here the preacher gave an analyſis and claſſification of thoſe who had for many years ſat under Dr. *Redford's* miniſtry, many of whom had probably heard him without effect, though ſome had brought forth fruit abundantly. To all theſe he made an earneſt appeal that the voice of him, who, "though dead, yet ſpeaketh," ſhould be heard with greater effect from the tomb. Then the Rev. gentleman gave a juſt and glowing ſketch of the deceaſed's character as a miniſter and a man; and with regard to Dr. *Redford's* literary attainments he ſaid that nonconformiſt miniſters were placed in circumſtances peculiarly unfavourable for authorſhip, the great bulk of their time being abſorbed in the duties of their office; under other circumſtances their deceaſed paſtor might have produced works which the world would not willingly have let die. The preacher concluded by a beautiful application of Dr. *Redford's* dying expreſſion, "There is no more death."

The Rev. *W. F. Hurndall*, Ph.D., M.A., of *Biſhop Stortford*, ſucceeded Dr. *Redford*, and was ordained in November, 1857. In the following year it was determined to rebuild the chapel, the bad arrangement and inconvenience of the old building having long been felt by this large and increaſing ſociety. Mr. Alderman *Padmore* (now M.P. for *Worceſter*) gave the munificent donation of 1000*l.*, and ſeveral other leading members of the congregation 500*l.* each for this purpoſe.

The new edifice, which coſt nearly 5800*l.*, was opened on the laſt day of May, 1859. It is an impoſing building, with a fine *Bath* ſtone ſemi-circular portico of four columns and two pilaſters, twenty-five feet high, with well-carved capitals. The dimenſions of the interior of the chapel are ſeventy-nine feet by fifty-nine feet; height of dome, forty-four feet; accommodation for upwards of 1000 perſons. The walls are covered with *French* grey and vermilion ſtencillings, and the galleries are lavender, picked out with white and gold. Two galleries encompaſs the whole chapel, except on the weſt ſide, where there is a receſs, flanked by *Corinthian* columns and pilaſters eighteen feet high, ſupporting an entablature and ſemicircular arch; behind this is a ſemi-dome, with ſmall ſtained-glaſs window at top. The receſs encloſes a ſmall gallery for ſingers, and an elaborate pulpit is reared in an encloſed ſpace in front of the receſs.

With all my admiration for the liberality, ſkill, and taſte exhibited in this new ſtructure, I cannot but expreſs my regret that ſo munificent an outlay ſhould have been ſpent on a claſſical building, inſtead of producing one much better adapted for the purpoſe. The architecture of *Greece* and *Rome* was never intended for tranſplantation into the foggy, cold, and rainy climate of the *Britiſh* iſles, beſides which there can be no neceſſity for

Chriſtians to fall back upon Pagan reſources when they have at hand ſuch wealth of materials in the various developments of the *Gothic*---a ſtyle or rather ſeries of ſtyles completely identified with the hiſtory and progreſs of Chriſtianity, and in every way more fitting for adoption in this country, whether as regards climatic conſiderations or the fitneſs of its aſſociations as connected with the Chriſtian worſhip. If it be urged that mediæval architecture is objectionable on the ſcore of its connection with Popery, then I ſay let us abandon the beſt of muſic, the fineſt painting, and the innumerable good things of life in which the jolly eccleſiaſtics of the middle ages indulged; let us retain nothing good which was ſhared by them, or which they brought to perfection before *Luther* nailed his colours to the maſt. I have ſomewhere read of ſome *Scotch* Preſbyterians who carried out their deep-rooted oppoſition to *Rome* even in the mode of their executions, and when two women were condemned to die for their attachment to the *Romiſh* creed it was decided not to uſe the ſtake and the faggot---fire being a Catholic preſcription---but the very oppoſite element of water, and ſo the poor wretches were faſtened in a river, up to their chins, that the firſt "freſh" which came down ſhould deprive them at once of miſery and of life. The Independents of the nineteenth cen-

tury ought ſurely to get rid---not of their hoſtility to what they believe to be error, but of that childiſh ſpirit of oppoſition which refuſes even good things when they have been originated by a proſcribed faith. Since the above was written I am glad to obſerve that in many parts of *England* diſſenters have ſhown themſelves not aſhamed of their own national Chriſtian architecture.

At the opening of the new chapel in Angel Street the ſervices were performed by the Rev. Dr. *Hurndall*, his father, the Rev. *W. A. Hurndall*, of *Biſhop Stortford*, Rev. *T. Greenfield*, of *Kidderminſter*, Rev. *T. Dodd*, of the Counteſs of *Huntingdon's* chapel, *Worceſter*, Rev. *S. Martin*, of *Weſtminſter*, and Rev. *Newman Hall*, of *Surrey* chapel, *London* (ſon of Mr. *J. V. Hall*, formerly bookſeller, of *Worceſter*). The collections amounted to upwards of 275*l.*, including 100*l.* from Mr. *Laſlett*, then M.P. for *Worceſter*. In the afternoon 150 of the members and friends ſat down to a collation at the Guildhall; *T. R. Hill*, Eſq., then Mayor of *Worceſter*, preſiding; and from a ſpeech then delivered by His Worſhip I have derived ſome of the materials for the early hiſtory of the ſociety. On the following Thurſday the firſt marriage in the new chapel was celebrated, the happy parties being Mr. *John Wigley*, of *Aſhbourne*, *Derbyſhire*, and Miſs

Emma Martin, the youngeſt daughter of Mr. *C. Martin*, of this city, who for many years has been aſſociated with the Congregational church. According to cuſtom a handſome family *Bible* was preſented to the young couple.

During the erection of the new chapel, the Muſic Hall in the old Corn Market had been hired for the purpoſe of congregational worſhip; and the hall being a large building, not well adapted for the tranſmiſſion of ſound, Dr. *Hurndall* ſuffered ſo much from an affection of the throat that for a long time he was unable to diſcharge his miniſterial functions, being aſſiſted by "ſupplies" from other places; and at length he was compelled, in February, 1860, to reſign his brief paſtorate.

The preſent miniſter is the Rev. *John Bartlett*, who was for ſeveral years co-paſtor with the Rev. Dr. *Bennett*, at the Falcon Square chapel, *London*. He commenced his miniſtry here on Sunday, Auguſt 19th, 1860, by preaching two admirable ſermons to very numerous and reſpectable congregations; taking for his texts---I *Corinthians* i, 23: "But we preach *Chriſt* crucified, unto the *Jews* a ſtumbling block, and unto the *Greeks* fooliſhneſs. *Theſſalonians* iii, 1: "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the *Lord* may have free courſe and be glorified, even as it is with you."

Baptiſts.

"Though different creeds their prieſtly robes denote,
Their orders various, and their rites remote,
Yet one their voice---their labours all combined---
Lights of the world, and friends of human kind:
So the bright galaxy o'er heaven diſplays
Of various ſtars the ſame unbounded blaze,
Where great and ſmall their mingling rays unite,
And earth and ſkies exchange their friendly light."

COLUMBIAD.

AMONG the earlieſt diſſenters from the Chriſtian church were thoſe who oppoſed the practice of infant baptiſm. As early as the fifth century, eccleſiastical councils found it neceſſary to decide againſt and anathematiſe them as ſchiſmatics; but it is rare indeed that opinions are put down by oppoſition---a fact which finds a remarkable illuſtration in the caſe of the Baptiſts, who in the twelfth century are ſaid by *Moſheim* to have amounted to 80,000. The Rev. *F. Boſworth (Briſtol)* remarks that the views of the Baptiſts could only have been manifeſted by their oppoſition to infant baptiſm,

becauſe immerſion was regularly practiſed by the church, as proved by *Bede* and other early writers; and in the conſtitutions of the Biſhop of *Worceſter*, in 1240, it is written---"We order that in every church there be a baptiſmal font of proper ſize and depth, and that trine immerſion (three times) be always practiſed." The exiſtence of the Baptiſts as a diſtinct ſect did not commence till the days of *Luther*, when the name Anabaptiſts was given them as one of reproach and contempt, their doctrine, it was believed, being blended with fanatical and lawleſs principles, oppoſed to the morals and good order of ſociety. Of the Baptiſts in *England* prior to the Reformation but little is known; but their name then appears among the various ſects who were ſtruggling for civil and religious liberty. *Croſby* ſtates that about 1532 the Baptiſts began to be publicly known and perſecuted, and in 1535 ten Anabaptiſts were put to death in ſundry places of the realm. In a liſt of books publiſhed by *John Oſwen*, the firſt printer in *Worceſter*, I find an octavo (date 1551), *A Dialogue between the ſeditious Anabaptiſts and the true Chriſtian, about Obedience to Magiſtrates;* and (ſame year) *The moſt frutefull Dialogues, treating upon the Baptiſm of Children, very neceſſarie to be rede of all Chriſtians in theſe moſt parylloufe tymes;* by *John Heron* (or *Veron*). Under *Henry VIII* the Bap-

tiſts were exempted from every act of grace, impriſoned, tortured, burnt, and baniſhed. *Elizabeth* was not far behind in her cruelty to them: and it was in relation to these unhappy victims of Proteſtant perſecution that *Fox* addreſſed his well-known letter to that Queen, begging that "the piles and flames of Smithfield, ſo long ago extinguiſhed by yr happy government may not be revived." It was not till the end of the ſixteenth century that the Baptiſts in *England* began to aſſume a denominational poſition. *Dutch* Baptiſts ſought a ſhelter in this country from the perſecutions of their own land. Here they formed churches; and *Engliſh* Baptiſts who had reſided in *Holland* returned home early in the ſeventeenth century, and ſpread their opinions widely. In 1640, there were five Baptiſt congregations in *London*, and throughout the provinces churches were rapidly gathered by *Cox*, *Oates*, *Denne*, *Jeffry*, *Fiſher*, *Miller*, *Gifford*, and *Tombs*. The latter laboured in *Worceſterſhire* and the adjoining counties: "but *Coppe* (ſays *Baxter*) baptiſed more than any other man I ever heard of, witneſs *Warwickſhire*, *Oxford*, and part of *Worceſter*." In Auguſt, 1642, the Anabaptiſts are claſſed with "Popiſh recuſants and other ſeparatiſts," in a declaration made by the Grand Jury for the county of *Worceſter*, which was aſſented to by the Sheriff, as alſo by Lord *Coventry* and

other magiſtrates, pledging themſelves to maintain the Proteſtant religion againſt all ſectaries. By the year 1649 the Baptiſts had "lifted up their heads and increaſed above all the ſects in the land," and the principal officers in many of the regiments had adopted their principles; but ſoon after the reſtoration of royalty, articles of viſitation were exhibited to miniſters, churchwardens, and others, making inquiry, among other things, for "convicted Papiſts, known Anabaptiſts," &c., who were to be diligently looked after in every pariſh. About the year 1653 the Baptiſts united in an aſſociation. The Midland Aſſociation, formed in 1655, repreſented *Warwick*, *Moreton*, *Bourton-on-the-Water*, *Alceſter*, *Tewkeſbury*, *Hook Norton*, and *Derby*. *Worceſter* is ſuppoſed not to have formed a ſeparate congregation of Baptiſts till three or four years after that date; nor did they join the aſſociated churches till probably about 1701, although ten years before that period twelve aſſociations had been formed, conſiſting of 107 churches.

In many of the early Baptiſt churches were men of enthuſiaſtic minds, who were eaſily wrought upon by the extraordinary events of thoſe ſtirring times, and by their eccentricity and ſtrong language brought great diſcredit on the body to which they were attached. In the time of *Cromwell* ſome of theſe enthuſiaſts believed

themſelves to have been commiſſioned by *God* Himſelf, and appeared regardleſs of earthly control: prominent among theſe were *Teakes* and *Powell*, of *Blackfriars*, who introduced into their ſermons moſt of the ſubjects debated in Parliament, and advocated the principles of their ſect with a force and extravagance at once fanatical and fantaſtical. Their favourite topic was the *Dutch* war: *God*, they maintained, had given *Holland* into the hands of the *Engliſh;* it was to be the landing place of the ſaints, whence they ſhould proceed to pluck the Whore of *Babylon* from her chair, and eſtabliſh the kingdom of *Chriſt* on the continent; and when *Cromwell* declined to carry out their extreme views he was publicly denounced in their ſermons as the beaſt in the Apocalypſe, the old dragon, and the man of ſin. *Teakes* and *Powell* were ſummoned before him to anſwer for their language, but they repeated it to his face. The *Dutch* ambaſſador went to hear theſe men preach, "but good *God*," ſays he, "what cruel, and abominable, and moſt horrid trumpets of fire, murder, and flame!" It was clear the Protector was afraid of meddling too much with theſe firebrands, of whom there were many both in the army and the Parliament who entertained republican opinions and were adverſe to *Cromwell's* aſſumption of ſupreme power, though the great body of their congregations

wiſely ſubmitted to his government. Mr. *Barebone*, the paſtor of a Baptiſt church in Fleet Street, gave name to *Cromwell's* little Parliament, of which he was a prominent member. Some Baptiſts alſo were admitted into *Cromwell's* committee of triers, for the ſelection of fitting clergymen for the various pariſhes throughout the country.

The Baptiſt ranks were much thinned, about the year 1650, by new ſects ariſing out of the agitated waters of the great ocean of religious controverſy. Among thoſe new lights were Diggers, Levellers, Ranters, and Quakers. The Diggers firſt appeared in *Surrey*, digging the commons and planting them with roots, ſaying that the time was arrived when the people were to be reſtored to freedom and to enjoy the fruits of the earth. But the Quakers were the moſt uncompromiſing opponents of the Baptiſts, and ſeveral of the manifeſtoes or confeſſions of faith put forth by the latter in the ſeventeenth century were aimed againſt the obnoxious followers of *Fox*, who put no faith in ordinances, or means of grace, or the Scriptures as a rule of faith or practice. Many of the Baptiſt members were excommunicated for adopting theſe doctrines. *Baxter*, and other good and moderate men who in vain attempted to conciliate the diſcordancies and amalgamate the various ſects of Proteſtants,

by propoſing the adoption of certain general principles of communion whereby they would have been placed on the ſimple ground of the ſincere profeſſion of our common Chriſtianity, complains ſtrongly of the belligerent propenſities of the Baptiſts and their oppoſition to all overtures for peace and unity:

"The Anabaptiſt party," he ſays, "conſiſted of ſome (but fewer) ſober, peaceable perſons, orthodox on other points, but withal of abundance of young, tranſported zealots, and a medley of opinioniſts, who all haſted directly to enthuſiaſm and ſubdiviſion, and by the temptation of proſperity and ſucceſs in arms, and the policy of ſome commanders, were led into rebellious and hot endeavours againſt the miniſtry and other ſcandalous crimes, and brought forth the horrid ſects of Ranters, Seekers, and Quakers, in this land. * * * There were but few of them that had not been the oppoſers and troublers of faithful miniſters, in this way ſtrengthening the hands of the profane."

Yet at another time he ſpeaks in a more kindly tone:

"For the Anabaptiſts themſelves (though I have written and ſaid ſo much againſt them), as I find moſt of them were perſons of zeal in religion, ſo many of them were ſober, godly people, and differed from others but on the point of infant baptiſm, or at moſt in the points of predeſtination, free will, and perſeverance."

And notwithſtanding their oppoſition to other ſects, and eſpecially to the Eſtabliſhed Church (whoſe edifices they were wont to denominate "ſteeple houſes"), and although they ſuffered much perſecution, even during the Commonwealth, they take the credit of having always inculcated and practised liberty of conſcience. One of their number---*Roger Williams*---is repreſented by the hiſtorian of the Baptiſts in *America* as the firſt Governor who proclaimed and practiſed that liberty towards all denominations of Chriſtians. Nevertheleſs this toleration did not extend to the two great bugbears of Prelacy and the Papacy, which all claſſes of diſſenters felt to be a common ground for the concentration of their forces in the great battle againſt thoſe who carried the mark of the beaſt.

Among the diſtinguiſhed men who in the ſeventeenth century eſpouſed the Baptiſt cauſe were Mr. *Robert Brown*, of *White Lady Aſton*, Mr. *Francis Cornwall*, M.A., *Emmanuel* College, and Mr. *John Tombes*, B.D.

In *Palmer's Nonconformiſts' Memorial*, vol. iii, p. 413, is as follows:

"Mr. *Robert Brown*, of *White Lady Aſton*, was a Fifth Monarchy man, and wrote againſt hearing the pariſh miniſter. Dr. *Stillingfleet* remarked of his *Jerubbaal*, that it contained the

ſubſtance of all that had been ſaid by the old *Browniſts*. He was generally eſteemed a good ſcholar; he died at *Plymouth* in conſequence of exceſſive preaching. He appears to have been of the Baptiſt denomination. *Croſby* mentions him, but adds nothing to the above account. Mr. *James* ſays there was a Baptiſt miniſter of this name, and doubtleſs the ſame perſon, who in 1670 reſided in *London*, and in 1678 at *Worceſter*. He was that year invited to ſucceed Mr. *Hardcaſtle*, at *Broadmead*, *Briſtol;* but in April, 1679, he was ſettled at *Weſtmancote*, *Worceſterſhire*. In an account of the Baptiſt church at *Plymouth* it is ſaid they gave their unanimous call to the Rev. *Robert Brown*, a miniſter of *Pædo*baptiſt* perſuaſion, then preaching at *Worceſter*. The letter is dated 30th of 11th month, 1687. Mr. *Brown* accepted the call, but the happineſs the church promiſed themſelves from his piety and talents was of ſhort duration, for after enjoying them about three months this good and great man fell aſleep in the arms of his Redeemer, 22nd February, 1688. As a tribute of regard the church erected a monument in their meeting to perpetuate his memory."

Mr. *Tombes* (mentioned above) was an excellent diſputant, who had been educated at *Oxford*, and was well verſed in *Greek* and *Hebrew*. To this great and good man's adherence to Baptiſt views may be attributed much of the ſucceſs and advancement of that cauſe in *Worceſterſhire* and the

* Thought to be a miſtake.

ſurrounding diſtricts. Through his influence with the committee of triers, and the high eſtimation in which his character was held, many Baptiſt miniſters were aſſigned to church livings in this county. *Tombes* was born at *Bewdley* in 1603, and having made rapid proficiency at *Oxford*, became lecturer at *Magdalen* Hall at the age of twenty-one, and ſubſequently adopted Baptiſt views. He laboured at *Worceſter*, *Leominſter*, *Roſs*, *Bewdley*, *Hereford*, *Ledbury*, *Briſtol*, *London*, and other places, and was one of the moſt popular preachers of his day. He formed the Baptiſt churches at *Bewdley*, *Leominſter*, and *Hereford*, argued in Latin with the Aſſembly of Divines, and had the beſt of it in a public diſputation with *Baxter*, which took place at *Bewdley* on New Year's Day, 1649, before a crowded audience. After a chequered career, during which he held ſeveral church livings, lectureſhips, &c., was ejected, fled from place to place, robbed, and once narrowly eſcaped with his life, he retired to *Saliſbury* at the Reſtoration, married a rich widow, conformed to the church (though only as a lay communicant), and died at the age of ſeventy-three. He had the advantage of *Baxter* both in learning and argument, and it required no ſmall ſhare of both to put to ſilence the many enemies of the Baptiſt creed and diſcipline, who were conſtantly putting

forth the groſſeſt calumnies, founded on a ſmall modicum of apparent truth. Their proteſts and replies to theſe calumnies may be found in their confeſſions of faith edited by Mr. *Underhill* in 1854. As a ſpecimen of the ridiculous matters brought to bear againſt them, it may be here ſtated that *D'Aſſigny* names, on his liſt of Anabaptiſts, the "Leg-of-mutton Baptiſts," ſo denominated becauſe at the celebration of the *Lord's* Supper they were ſaid to ſit down at table and feaſt themſelves with legs of mutton and other meats. But the fact was, that in thoſe days many of the congregation came from far, and it was neceſſary after the communion that they ſhould be refreſhed before being diſmiſſed to their diſtant homes. The records and confeſſions of the Baptiſts bear on their face the character of truth and honeſty, ſufficiently to refute the calumnies circulated againſt them; and in regard to conſcientiouſneſs and ſelf-denial I may be allowed to make one brief quotation from the books of *Fenſtanton* church, where, in January, 1694, one *John Cropper* was baptiſed, and---"Obſerve (ſays the record) it was at that time a hard froſt and deep ſnow, and yet no hurt enſued: *God* will be honoured in His own ways, and protect His ſervants in the obeying of His commands. Let none be afraid to venture into the water when the ſeaſon is cold, leſt they

be laid in their graves before the weather be warm.---*John Cropper*, ſenior elder."

The Baptiſt ſociety at *Worceſter* ſeems to have been eſtabliſhed about the year 1658, under the paſtorate of Mr. *Thomas Fecknam;* but the Reſtoration of *Charles II*, the *Savoy* conference, the Act of Uniformity, and other meaſures taken by the enemies of religious liberty, reduced the nonconformiſts generally, and the Baptiſts in particular, to a diſtreſſing condition. *Fecknam* was ſoon loſt ſight of, and the ſociety at *Worceſter* was broken up for about eight years. By the *Townſend* MSS. I find that on the 28th of March, 1661, Mr. *Townſend* and Mr. *G. Symonds*, two of the *Worceſterſhire* juſtices, releaſed out of the Caſtle gaol at *Worceſter* fourteen Baptiſts and a great number of Quakers, on their promiſe to appear at the next gaol delivery. In the *Worceſter* county records, the gaoler's liſt of priſoners in the year 1667 included *Thomas Fecknam*, who was ſaid to be a leader of the Quakers, and who had then been in gaol three years for refuſing to take the oath of allegiance. No doubt this was the Baptiſt miniſter, as the various religious denominations were often confounded together in thoſe times. *Thomas Fecknam* had now and then ſome liberty accorded to him, but the gaoler reported that "this kindneſs had wrought no conformitie or ſubmiſſion in him."

The meetings of the Baptiſt Midland Aſſociation alſo were diſcontinued or held in great ſecrecy till 1690, it being unſafe for diſſenting miniſters to appear in public, although at the ſame time *Roman* Catholics were coming forth from their lurking places and were received graciouſly by the King. *Venner's* inſurrection gave occaſion and excuſe for an order in Council, followed by a proclamation, forbidding all ſectaries to meet in large numbers or at unuſual times, though the Baptiſts, Independents, and Quakers, ſeverally publiſhed their deteſtation of *Venner's* proceedings and urged their prayer for toleration. The Preſbyterian clergy, too, were expoſed to rude inſults, pretended plots were laid to their charge, and many of them being ejected from the church, joined the Baptiſt and other congregations. In 1664-5 the Conventicle and Five-Mile Acts became law, and were followed by the Teſt Act. Diſſenters' meetings were then broken up or expoſed to gangs of vulgar informers. Between the years 1660 and 1688 it has been eſtimated that 60,000 nonconformiſts were incarcerated, 5,000 of whom died in priſon, while their confiſcations and loſs of property amounted to between twelve and fourteen millions ſterling! Baptiſts at that time were hotly perſecuted; and as they held their meetings in ſecluded places, ſpies everywhere abounded. The governor of *Deal*

Caſtle, a bitter opponent of the Baptiſts, hearing that a few of them intended meeting in a lonely field in that neighbourhood, determined himſelf to apprehend them: noiſeleſſly approaching, he heard their voices---liſtened---found they were praying for him---returned without attempting their capture---became deeply impreſſed---joined the very body he had perſecuted, and was their paſtor. Such periods indeed try men.*

In this ſtate of things it need ſcarcely be ſaid that the Baptiſt ſociety in *Worceſter* again ſuffered greatly, and independently of ſtate perſecution they ſeem to have loſt ground by internal diviſion, as about that time a Mr. *Pardoe* was miniſter of a ſeparate congregation of Baptiſts here; and from a document which I ſhall ſhortly produce it would appear that he entertained Arminian views of univerſal redemption, ſuch as are adopted by General Baptiſts, while the old ſtock were probably Calviniſtic, or Particular Baptiſts. *William Pardoe* was impriſoned at *Worceſter* in 1664, for nonconformity, and continued in confinement nearly ſeven years; and in the gaoler's liſt of priſoners in *Worceſter* priſon for the year 1667 and again in 1683 he figures as a Quaker; but, as I have before ſtated, the officials of thoſe days were not exact in their deſcriptions. He afterwards travelled on foot from place to place

* See paper by Rev. *F. Boſworth*, *Briſtol.*

to preach, and was the author of ſeveral works. He died at *Worceſter* in 1692, after having ſeen the interior of many priſons, and being excommunicated, was ſaid to have been buried in a garden in *Loweſmoor*, where his body, with that of his wife, were diſcovered early in the preſent century while ſome perſons were digging for building purpoſes. Mr. *Chambers*, the author of *Biographical Illuſtrations of Worceſterſhire*, ſtates that ſome perſons then remembered the ſtone which had been erected to his memory, and adds that there was at *Leominſter* a full account of Mr. *Pardoe* in MS. *Croſby* ſays, "Mr. *William Pardoe* was a worthy, humble, ſelf-denying preacher, and a great ſufferer for his religion---a very uſeful man, and bleſſed with great ſucceſs in his miniſterial work. He lived moſtly about *Worceſter*, was sometimes in *Leiceſterſhire*, ſometimes in *Yorkſhire*, and wrote ſome part of his *Bethania's Walks* in *Worceſter* priſon, and ſome part of it in *Leiceſter* priſon."

Mr. *Eccles*, paſtor of the *Bromſgrove* congregation, and who had been baptiſed by Mr. *Tombes*, was a ſevere ſufferer by the perſecution, being ſeized while preaching, greatly abuſed, and put into a dungeon in *Worceſter* gaol, and here it was ſtated "he might have lain, had not his Divine Maſter raiſed him up a friend in Mr. *Swift*, who was one of the members for the county of

Worceſter." To the honour of that gentleman be it recorded that he was not aſhamed of the cauſe of a poor impriſoned Baptiſt miniſter, but was bound for him in the ſum of 1,000*l.* in order to procure his liberty. Mr. *Eccles* commenced his calling when but a youth, at the age of fifteen or ſixteen, being known as "the boy preacher." Judicious people, however, will never value very highly the crude fruit of ſuch precocious preaching, forced to a certain ripeneſs before its time. *Robert Hall* and many other great orators had occaſion to lament the miſtakes made in their too early efforts, and probably a larger number of authors the *cacoëthes ſcribendi* which firſt induced them to write. A magazine contributor has ſuccinctly expreſſed a wholeſome opinion on this point: "Let us (ſays he) have the mature thing: give us intellectual beef rather than intellectual veal." An elegy written on Mr. *Eccles's* death contained the following ſtanzas:

> "With fervent zeal the Goſpel ſeed he ſows,
> Which *Bromſgrove*, *Bewdley*, largely from him mows;
> In active youth and manhood there his charge,
> *Chriſt's* work he plies with approbation large."

Under *James II* the condition of diſſenters was ſomewhat ameliorated, for although that monarch was no friend to them or their cauſe, he promoted toleration to a certain extent, in order that the Catholics might receive the benefit of it.

When the King was at *Worceſter* the neighbouring diſſenters of all denominations ſent their addreſſes to him, which the Earl of *Plymouth*, being Lord Lieutenant, was to receive and deliver to the King. When he brought the firſt two, the King aſked him what religion the men who brought them were of. "Indeed, ſire," replied the Lord Lieutenant, "I did not aſk them; but I know by their looks they are neither of your religion nor mine."

William III brought no ſmall peace to the troubled land by his Toleration Act, in conſequence of which the repreſentatives of 100 Baptiſt ſocieties (including five from the Midland Aſſociation) aſſembled in *London*, organiſed their new aſſociations, and agreed to a confeſſion of faith in thirty-two articles. The ſocieties in the Midland Aſſociation were then the following: *Warwick*, *Moreton*, *Tewkeſbury*, *Hook Norton*, *Alceſter*, *Bromſgrove*, *Dymock* (now *Upton*) *Hereford* (including *Leominſter*), and *Kilby*, in *Leiceſterſhire*. *Bromſgrove* is the mother church of the aſſociation, having been eſtabliſhed between 1650 and 1660, when Mr. *Eccles* preached both there and at *Bewdley*.

It was not till three or four years after the Toleration Act, which gave liberty and freedom to all religious denominations except Catholics, that the Baptiſt congregation at *Worceſter* was

again conſtructed "in proper Goſpel order," as their own record ſtates; but as that event, together with a brief record of the hiſtory of the *Worceſter* Baptiſts, is detailed in the "church book" belonging to that ſociety, and probably written by Mr. *Belſher*, their paſtor, in 1796, I now proceed to quote therefrom as follows:

"The church book belonging to the Baptiſt ſociety meeting in Silver Street, *Worceſter*, 1796; Mr. *William Belſher*, paſtor.

"Dr. *Calamy* in his *Abridgment*, vol. i, p. 29, ſays that at *Bewdley* there was a church of Anabaptiſts. At *Worceſter* the Independents gathered a church. This ſeems to refer to the time between 1649 and 1660. By that account it appears there was no Baptiſt church at *Worceſter* about 1649, though ſome of that denomination might be in connection with the Independents there at that time, or ſoon after, which was the caſe then in ſeveral parts of *England* and *Wales*. There is now before me (writes Mr. *Belſher*) an old book* belonging to the Baptiſts at *Worceſter*, bearing this title: *A Book of the Records of the Church of Chriſt, in Worceſter, made in the eleventh month of the year* 1658. *By Thomas Fecknam; conſiſting of Believers baptiſed with water in the name of the Lord Jeſus.* There it is obſerved that they were diſtinguiſhed from the Independents and others. The motto in that title page is *Acts* xxiv, 14---'But this I confeſs unto thee, that after the way which they call

* Not now to be found.---*J. N.*, 1860.

hereſy, ſo worſhip I the *God* of my fathers'---a motto generally adopted in Baptiſt publications and confeſſions of faith of that period---adapting it to a church, and not a ſingle perſon. The next leaf begins thus: 'The names of the members of the church, both brethren and ſiſters.' The firſt name is *Thomas Fecknam*, and with him ſeventeen men and twenty-one women; in all thirty-nine members. This was a conſiderable church at that time. But it does not appear that Mr. *Fecknam* did write any more in the book than the title page and the names of the members as already noted, and ſome queries reſolved at *Alceſter* by the meſſengers of the aſſociated churches met there the 12 and 13 day of the ſecond month, 59; at which time the church of *Chriſt* at *Worceſter* tendered with them by mutual conſent. Two of thoſe queries were from *Worceſter*. The Reſtoration of *Charles II* happened about thirteen calendar months after that meeting at *Alceſter*. The Baptiſts and other nonconformiſts were then violently perſecuted through the land, and probably thoſe at *Worceſter* felt the force and ſeverity of the times. It's very probable that Mr. *Fecknam* was the miniſter of this young church at the beginning, but whether he were a native of *Worceſter*, or near it, I know not, nor is it eaſy to determine. The name of one of the women members recorded by him is *Sarah Fecknam*. As he wrote no more in the book, probably the perſecution drove him away and ſcattered his flock.* In the general aſſembly, at *London*, in September, 1689, *Thomas Fecknam*

* He was impriſoned in *Worceſter* gaol for ſome years.---*See* p. 156.

is named paſtor of the Baptiſt church at *Sandwich*, *Kent;* probably this was the ſame perſon, ſettled there in the courſe of the long perſecution. In the narrative of the aſſembly in *London*, 1692, he is named as paſtor of the ſame church. I have before me a printed elegy compoſed on his death, which happened in October, 1695, in the ſixty-eighth year of his age. There it is noted he began to preach very young, ſo that he was called the preaching Baptiſt boy, and that he was in the miniſtry upwards of fifty years, and ſix years in priſon. There is a great character given him in the elegy. I ſuppoſe he was the perſon that gathered the firſt Baptiſt church at *Worceſter*. The following article is ſufficient to ſhow the ſtate of things about *Worceſter* at that time. Dr. *Calamy*, in his account, vol. ii, p. 776, after he had given an account of the hardſhips ſuffered by ſeveral nonconformiſt miniſters in the county, ſays---'Such things as theſe were common, it ſeems, in theſe parts in thoſe times, for one Mr. *Robert Humphrys*, an Anabaptiſt preacher, an inhabitant of the pariſh of *Claines*, about two miles from *Worceſter*, for preaching in his houſe, had by a warrant of Col. *S*——, of *O*——,* three cows taken from him, worth about 12*l.*, and all the corn in his barn, worth about 15*l.*, and all the goods in his houſe that were of any value, and could never get anything reſtored.' In the ſame page he ſpeaks of Mr. *Pardoe*, as noted above. This ſhows what ſufferers our denomination were then in and about *Worceſter*. Mr. *Pardoe* was impriſoned at

* Probably *Sandys* of *Omberſley*.

Worceſter in 1664, and continued there near ſeven years.

"The next page in the *Worceſter* records runs thus---'The reſtitution of the church of *Chriſt* at *Worceſter* the 10th of the 12th month, 1666, to her communion and fellowſhip with Him in His holy inſtitutions and ordinances, according to her firſt love and willing obedience from a deep ſenſe of her backſliding from Him. Reſolving in His ſtrength for the time to come to cleave unto Him with purpoſe of heart.' This was full eight years after the firſt formation in 1658, but it appears here they had backſlidden and gone out of order within thoſe troubleſome times. On this reſtitution their names are put down, being but eleven men members and ten women---in all twenty-one. Among the men there are but three or four of the former names, and about the ſame number of the former women. In thoſe few years many of them were either dead or diſperſed into different parts of the country; yet it appears that ſeveral of the twenty-one had been baptiſed by ſome miniſters ſince the firſt formation. Mr. *Pardoe* was now in priſon in this city, and had by ſome means a ſociety diſtinct from the newly reſtored church. Probably ſome of the former were now gone to him. The difference between Mr. *Pardoe* was partly, if not chiefly, about the extent of the death of *Chriſt*. He acknowledges that he held univerſal redemption, but in the preface to his *Bethania* he ſays that he was charged with many other things. Of the church reſtored in 1666, it appears they had no miniſter at that period. The firſt name in the liſt of members is *John*

Edwards, who I ſuppoſe was a gentleman that lived afterwards near *Leominſter*, and a worthy member there many years. There it is noted 'he was brought very early to *Chriſt* in his young and tender years, and was a great encourager of believers in the ways of *God*, when he lived in *Worceſter*.' This inclines me to believe he was the chief man in the church at the time we are now upon.

"By the records it looks as if Mr. *Eliſha Hathaway* was the ſecond perſon that joined this church after the reſtitution near the cloſe of 1666. There are no dates in the records from the year now mentioned to 1692, except on the death of a few members, nor any church tranſactions recorded during that period, except a legacy received of Mr. *Philip Bearcroft*, given by his mother, to be diſpoſed at the diſcretion of Mr. *William Pardoe* to the poor of this ſociety. It will appear below that Mr. *Hathaway* abovenamed began to preach in this church about 1674, or poſſibly ſooner, as he was then about or near forty years of age. He was very uſeful in this ſociety through many years of perſecution and trouble.

"Though this church was of ſo long ſtanding, it was not ſet in proper Goſpel order, it ſeems, till the following date. This is in the record: 'At a meeting held the 27th day of the 5th month, 1692, when the congregation enter'd covenant with the *Lord* and one another, then by the free choice of the whole our beloved brother *Eliſha Hathaway* was by them nominated to be their paſtor. At that time were elected *William Randal* and *William Charles* elders,

Mathew Handy and *Richard Hampton* deacons.' By the records I conclude that all this was done by the church without any aſſiſtance from other miniſters. It is recorded in the book that to that day the church had not been a regular ſociety. There were ſet down twenty articles of belief, or confeſſion of faith, and ſeven articles as a church covenant; then the names of the members, men and women, as ſigning the whole. The newly choſen paſtors, elders, and deacons, ſigned firſt; all the men members, fourteen, and the women, twenty---in all thirty-four. It is remarkable that of the twenty in 1666, there is but one of them in the liſt 1692, in the courſe of twenty-ſix years. This imperfect ſituation accounts for their not being in the general aſſembly in *London*, 1689.

"Before the above meeting, 1692, I conclude from Mr. *Holder's* MS. that Mr. *Hathaway* was about to leave *Worceſter*. He was in *London* about a year and half, and Mr. *Holder* ſupplied at *Worceſter*. Very probably it was after Mr. *Hathaway's* return that the above ſettlement was made in the church. Notwithſtanding the above regulations in 1692 it ſeems there were ſome not quite ſatisfied, for it is recorded in the book that upon the 7th day of the 2nd month, 1702, according to an appointment of the church and by the hand of our beloved brother, *John Willis* of *Aulceſter*, and brother *Jos. Price* of *Tewkeſbury*, brother *Hathaway* was ordained the paſtor of this church, and brother *Horniblow* and brother *Thompſon* ordained elders, and brother *Handy* and brother *Troort* ordained deacons. Now they were brought into the common way, and very

probably into the connection alſo, for I find that the Aſſociation was at *Worceſter* the preceding year, 1701.

"As Mr. *Pardoe* was ſo long in priſon here and had a ſociety in this place, died and was buried here, it may be right to ſay a little more of him. Mr. *Holder*, in his MS., ſays, 'I will mention Mr. *Pardoe*, from whoſe miniſtry I had moſt ſoul benefit, and may truly account him my ſpiritual father in the *Lord*. He lay in *Worceſter* gaol ſeven years for conſcience ſake, and came out wonderfully improved in divine knowledge and miniſterial abilities. He travelled on foot from place to place to preach the Goſpel, and was put into *Leiceſter* priſon, where he lay about nine months. After ſome years he was put into *Hereford* priſon, where he lay about four years, but neither his ſufferings, his great labours, nor his various afflictions, did in the leaſt abate his love to *Chriſt* and the ſouls of men. He was a ſpecial inſtance of the power of ſupernatural grace, and a great promoter in my faith of *God*, fidelity to His covenant, and the veracity of His promiſes. He died in *Worceſter*, leaving a ſweet ſavour of *Chriſt*, alſo his *Bethania*, and a divine paper called *The Mariner's Compaſs*, alſo many divine letters written to his friends when he was in priſon, a collection of which I have in my poſſeſſion; by all which being dead he ſpeaks.' Thus far Mr. *Holder*. Thoſe good letters are periſhed, I ſuppoſe. His *Bethania* and *Compaſs* fell into my hand, and I have them ſtill. Mr. *Pardoe* died in 1692, as noted already. Very probably his ſociety at *Worceſter* after his death joined the other church in that city. In the

Hiſtory of Bridgnorth, in the double lectures appointed there, it appears that Mr. *Hathaway* was to preach at four of thoſe lectures appointed then. There was no miniſter but Mr. *Hathaway* appointed ſo many times to preach, not even Mr. *Thomas* of *Perſhore*, who was then in the prime of life, about thirty years of age, and *Hathaway* about ſeventy-two, as that was in 1706, which ſhows how acceptable the latter was and how ſtrong his conſtitution was at that age. Thus this great and heroic ſervant of *Jeſus Chriſt* continued in his Maſter's work till he was called to reſt in a good old age. Mr. *Holder* in his MS. ſays, 'Mr. *Hathaway* was paſtor of the Baptiſt congregation in the city of *Worceſter* nearly forty years, and died in 1714, aged upwards of eighty years, under whoſe miniſtry I ſat often with much comfort and edification. I have thought him ſometimes, I confeſs, too warm and zealous againſt the rites and ceremonies and corrupt traditions in the eſtabliſhment, we having our liberty as diſſenters; but he was a plain evangelical miniſter of the Goſpel and did much good. He had a great experience of a ſaving work of grace upon his ſoul, and ſo clear evidence of his intereſt in *Chriſt* and the covenant of grace as carried him through all his afflictions. On his death-bed he praiſed *God* that he had no cloud in his ſpirit or doubt in his ſoul about his future happineſs! Hence the reader may ſuppoſe that Mr. *Holder* miſtook in ſaying that Mr. *Hathaway* had been near forty years paſtor of the church; but the former was well acquainted with what was done in 1692 and 1702, and with the labours of the latter for forty years. He meant, I ſuppoſe, that

the latter did the work of a paſtor all that time, whatever was ſuppoſed to be done in 1692 and 1702. By another hand I am informed that Mr. *Hathaway* had ſuffered ſo much from the eſtabliſhment that after the Revolution he was very ſevere upon them at times. Preaching concerning *God* making a hedge round his people, he ſaid, 'it was a thorn hedge, and many of the biſhops have torn their lawn ſleeves in attempting to break through it.' It ſeems the meeting houſe at *Worceſter* was built in his time, for I am told that he was buried in it, and that now the table pew is upon the graveſtone that it cannot be ſeen. The report is, that in his time the place was crowded, that perſons were obliged to go before time in order to get a place. Since the above was written, the inſcription on the grave was found to be thus---'Here lieth the body of Mr. *Eliſha Hathaway*, Goſpel miniſter, teacher, and paſtor of the congregation forty years; having finiſhed his work by the will of *God* he fell aſleep in *Jeſus* the 17th September, 1714, aged eighty-one.'

"Mr. *Hathaway* was ſucceeded by Mr. *Iſaac Poynting*, who came from near *Froome*, *Somerſetſhire*. The records name above ſeventy, who ſeem to have been added in Mr. *Hathaway's* time, 1702, and a few after Mr. *Poynting* came. The book after was moſtly blank paper. Mr. *Iſaac Poynting* died 5th May, 1740, aged ſixty-eight, paſtor of this church twenty-five years. I do not know of anything remarkable in the church during his time. It is uncertain whether the Aſſociation was at *Worceſter* before 1701, but page 41-2 above ſhows that it was there in 1701,

1707, 1715, 1721, 1725, 1738, 1754, 1767, and 1780.

"Mr. *Iſaac Poynting* was ſucceeded by his ſon, Mr. *John Poynting*.---(See biographical account of him in *Baptiſt Regiſter*, vol. i, p. 510.)

"After the death of Mr. *John Poynting* (who was miniſter here for half a century), the church was deſtitute of a paſtor from October 6, 1791, till the ſettlement of Mr. *William Belſher*, December 7, 1796. In 1795 the circular letter mentions 'Brother *Dawſon*' as then 'ſupplying at *Worceſter*,' and he was appointed to preach at the next aſſociation meeting at *Dudley*. That letter was addreſſed to 'the elders and meſſengers of the ſeveral Baptiſt churches meeting for Divine worſhip at *Bewdley*, *Birmingham*, *Brettell Lane*, *Coſeley*, *Dudley*, *Eveſham*, *Leominſter*, *Perſhore*, *Ryeford*, *Shiffnall*, *Tewkeſbury*, *Upton*, and *Worceſter*.' The circular letter for 1796 mentions *Worceſter* among ſeveral other churches having experienced gracious revivals, and adds concerning *Worceſter* that there had been no additions before for nine years, but this year both the congregation and the church have been favoured with pleaſing additions."

Here we quit Mr. *Belſher's* MS., and proceed with the hiſtory from other ſources. The members who ſigned an addreſs to Mr. *Belſher* (who had come from *Briſtol*) in July, 1796, requeſting his acceptance of the *Worceſter* paſtorate, were---*Wm. Fitzer*, *Jas. Harriſon*, *Joſhua Pitt*, *Saml. Barnard*, *Thos. Page*, *Mathew Griffiths*, *Saml.*

Nicholas, *N. Willoughby*, *Mary Butler*, *Ann Malpas*, *Eliz. Sanders*, *Mary Robinſon*, *Eliz. Hinton*, *Ann Nicholas*, *Mary Day*, *Sarah Pitt*, *Eliz. Blackwell*, *Eliz. Matley*, *Mary Perm* (or *Penn*), *Ann Hunt*, *Eliz. Harper*, *Eliz. Brunſden*, *Mary Laurence*, and *Eliz. Watkins*. It has been already ſtated that a chapel was built in Silver Street during Mr. *Hathaway's* life: that building remained till the year 1796, when Mr. *Belſher* became paſtor. It was then taken down and a new one erected. It is a proof of the good feeling which exiſted among the diſſenting congregations in *Worceſter* at that time, that the Independents lent Mr. *Belſher* their chapel while the new Baptiſt chapel was being erected, and he accordingly preached to his congregation at "Angel *Row** chapel," as it was called, till the opening of that in Silver Street, on July 27th, 1797. On this occaſion ſermons were preached by the Rev. *S. Pearce*, of *Birmingham*, the Rev. *James Smith*, and the Rev. Mr. *Butterworth*. It ſeems that the erection of this chapel got the ſociety into trouble, for *Willoughby* the carpenter entered an action againſt them for a debt, which was the cauſe of a conſiderable miſunderſtanding between Mr. *Belſher* and his congregation, ſo much ſo that the ordinance of the *Lord's* Supper was ſuſpended for half-a-year. *Willoughby*, how-

* It is called "Angel Lane meeting houſe" in another place.

ever, appears to have behaved diſhoneſtly, and was excommunicated, or expelled the ſociety, and the debt was at laſt compromiſed.

Mr. *Belſher* reſigned the paſtorate, from illneſs, on the 25th October, 1817. At that time the number of members was 112, and it is a ſingular fact that up to this period there had been but four miniſters to the Baptiſt chapel for 143 years.

Henry Page, A.M., accepted the invitation of the ſociety to become its paſtor, November 21, 1817. He was "a ſtrong tempered man," and is ſaid to have come to *Worceſter* fortified with ſeveral hundred ſermons which he had collected from a variety of ſources to ſave himſelf the trouble of compoſition. It is probable that his hearers, who greatly diſapproved of this plan of providing them with divinity, nevertheleſs derived an advantage from it, as ſuch pillagers have generally the good taſte to ſelect far better productions than they themſelves are capable of giving birth to. Mr. *Page*, I fear, left behind him a character far different from that prolific divine, Dr. *Litchfield*, rector of All Saints, Thames Street, who, in 1447, bequeathed to poſterity no fewer than 3,083 ſermons written by his own hand. During Mr. *Page's* miniſtry the firſt mention is made of the introduction of gas into the chapel, in February, 1823. This miniſ-

ter reſigned in June, 1827, and died at *Boulogne*, in 1833. The number of members was 150 at the time of his reſignation.

Thomas Waters, M.A., who came from *Perſhore*, ſucceeded Mr. *Page* on November 10, 1827, and reſigned from illneſs Auguſt 31, 1838. He died in two months afterwards. The number of members was then 199. During his miniſtry, namely, in 1829, the chapel was conſiderably enlarged, a piece of ground adjoining having been purchaſed for the purpoſe at a coſt of 275*l.* The *Worceſter Herald* of Auguſt 28th in that year ſays---"The Baptiſt chapel in Silver Street, in this city, having undergone conſiderable enlargement, rendering it capable of ſeating a congregation of 700, was on Wedneſday morning (Auguſt 26) reopened for Divine worſhip, and a ſermon preached by the Rev. *Robert Hall*, of *Briſtol*, and formerly of *Leiceſter*, from *Timothy* iii, 5: 'The power of godlineſs.' The preacher delivered a diſcourſe of great power and eloquence to a highly reſpectable though not a large congregation; collection, 45*l.* 15*s.* In the evening the Rev. *J. F. Leifchild*, of *Briſtol*, preached a no leſs admirable and appropriate ſermon, from *Pſalm* cxlix, 2, and further collections were made amounting to 17*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.*" The total receipts of the day, including donations, amounted to 84*l.* 17*s.* 2*d.*, which, with the fund

collected by the paſtor and that previouſly raiſed by the friends in *Worceſter*, through the perſonal efforts of the paſtor, was nearly ſufficient to meet the whole of the expenſes, about 1000*l.* The chapel has long ſince been free from debt. In the Baptiſt regiſter I find that Mr. *Waters*, at one period of his miniſtry, found it extremely difficult to preſerve diſcipline in his congregation, a laxity of conduct among many members of the ſociety being perceptible, and differences ariſing on the ſubject of admitting Pædobaptiſts (thoſe who baptiſe infants) to partake of the communion with them. In the year 1834 a meeting was called, at which the miniſter requeſted the deacons to ſay whether they had confidence in him, and would ſupport him in the temperate, firm, and ſcriptural adminiſtration of that diſcipline which alone could reſtore purity, peace, and proſperity to the church. There were ſixty-ſix hands held up for him and only five againſt. Some members were then excluded, others withdrew, and a reſolution was paſſed---

"That any member reſiding within reaſonable diſtance who ſhall not regularly attend upon the miniſtry of the paſtor, or being abſent on three ſucceſſive ſabbaths from the *Lord's* Supper, ſhould be viſited by the deacons, and if not give ſatiſfactory reaſons ſhould be ſeparated from the communion."

In April 21, 1834, an entry occurs in the regiſter---

"At a church meeting it was reſolved to permit Mrs. *Sanders*, a pious Pædobaptiſt, to commune with us at the *Lord's* table, but not to be a member of the church."

This reſolution ſeems to have given diſſatisfaction to ſeveral members, and Mrs. *Sanders* kindly reſigned the privilege; but about five years afterwards the ſociety wiſely adopted the following reſolution, by fifty-nine to ten:

"That in future, pious Pædobaptiſts be admitted to partake with us the *Lord's* Supper, but not to be conſidered as members of the church or entitled to vote in church affairs."

On the 20th of May, 1839, *Enoch Williams* became paſtor, but reſigned in January, 1841; the number of members then being 195.

William Crowe, of *Hackney*, accepted the paſtorate on the 31ſt of May, 1841. He originally was an Independent, and became a miſſionary at *Travancore*, having been trained for miſſionary work at the *Goſport* College. He was a man of ſtern and unbending principle and irreproachable life; his preaching was chiefly doctrinal, but it had the great advantage of earneſtneſs and conſiſtency in the preacher, whoſe life agreed

with the precepts he uttered. He was ever in the foremoſt rank of the promoters of ſocial progreſs and reformation, and gave his aid to every movement having for its object the advancement of civil and religious liberty. The writer of theſe pages will have long impreſſed on his memory the aſſociation of good men belonging to various denominations whom he was in the conſtant habit of ſeeing on public platforms, uniting in their advocacy of every good cauſe and ſtimulating their fellow citizens alſo to lend their aid; among theſe the four moſt prominent were the Rev. *John Davies* (Church of *England*), Dr. *Redford* (Independent), Mr. *Crowe* (Baptiſt), and *Samuel Darke* (Quaker). Three of theſe have been but recently removed from us, but their works do follow them, and their memory will be bleſt to ſucceeding generations who may have profited by their labours or heard of their good example:

> "How bleſt the righteous when he dies!
> When ſinks a weary ſoul to reſt,
> How mildly beam the cloſing eyes,
> How gently heaves th' expiring breaſt!"

During Mr. *Crowe's* paſtorate of Silver Street chapel ſome conſiderable defections took place from the ſociety, eſpecially in 1844, when ſeveral of the members embraced the profeſſion of *Plymouth* Brethren, and others in 1851 the

frightful doctrines of Mormoniſm, to the great grief of the paſtor and the reſt of the congregation. The regiſter during Mr. *Crowe's* time contains nothing further worthy of note (beyond diſmiſſals for drunkenneſs, inconſiſtent conduct, &c.) than that in 1849 it was decided that the *Lord's* Supper ſhould be adminiſtered after morning ſervice inſtead of afternoon; and in 1855 the Rev. *J. J. Waite's* ſyſtem of pſalmody was adopted. This ſyſtem of choral harmony produced an effect ſo ſtriking, that in no congregation in *Worceſter* is the ſolemn act of praiſe performed in a more chaſte and appropriate manner, a correct knowledge of part ſinging having been obtained, and the tunes adopted being no longer a collection of ſtreet ballatry, but fine old harmonies gleaned from the beſt of ſources. It is to be regretted that our church choirs did not avail themſelves more largely of Mr. *Waite's* ſervices. That gentleman, who reſided at *Hereford*, paid occaſional viſits to this city, where, although completely blind, he inſtructed large claſſes in ſacred pſalmody, with a ſucceſs which had hitherto been without precedent here. Mr. *Crowe* remained at *Worceſter* for ſixteen years, reſigning his miniſtry in 1857, and Mr. *Sturmer* (the preſent miniſter) was appointed his ſucceſſor in January, 1858. He is the ſon of the Rev. *F. Sturmer*, Rector of *Heap-*

ham, *Lincolnſhire*, was brought up for the church, educated at Merchant Taylors' School, *London*, and Grammar School, *Huntingdon*, entered at St. *John's* College, *Cambridge*, and was baptiſed by the Rev. *Baptiſt Noel* in 1856; he ſubſequently entered the *London* Univerſity. The number of members in 1860 was 200, with 269 ſcholars and twenty-eight teachers.

No ſeparate congregation has ſprung from Silver Street, and the moſt proſperous periods of the denomination were during the paſtorates of Mr. *Hathaway* and Mr. *Belſher*.

Baptiſts now ſubſiſt under two denominations, General Baptiſts and Particular Baptiſts. The latter deſignation is given to thoſe who hold Calviniſtic views, and who are in every reſpect but their diſtinctive doctrine the ſame as the Independents. General Baptiſts maintain the doctrine of univerſal redemption; but they are divided into the Old Connection (Unitarian) and the New Connection (Trinitarian), the latter being by far the moſt numerous. Among both the Particular and General Baptiſts there is another ground of ſeparation, relating to the terms of communion at the *Lord's* Supper. Some churches (each ſociety or congregation is a church) do not allow perſons who have not received baptiſm according to their views of it to join with them in the celebration of this

rite. Of this number are ſome of the Particular Baptiſts, and all the New Connection of General Baptiſts. Others, however (and among them the *Worceſter* ſociety), do not ſcruple to meet, on that occaſion, not only thoſe of the Baptiſt perſuaſion, who hold other opinions widely different from their own, but even perſons who do not embrace the Baptiſt tenets, provided their religious faith is in other reſpects, as they conceive, orthodox, and their lives conformable to their profeſſion. This is called "open communion;" and the tolerant ſpirit which it cultivates is making rapid progreſs through the denomination. The *Worceſter* ſociety belongs in practice to the General, although its conſtitution was that of the Particular Baptiſts. In *Ireland* and *Scotland* the Baptiſts have many congregations, but neither there nor in this country do their opinions ſpread ſo faſt as in the United States of *North America*.*

Among the Baptiſt celebrities who have been connected with *Worceſter*, both by intercourſe with their brethren here and preaching at Silver Street and Angel Street chapels, were *Robert Hall* and *John Foſter*. *Hall's* wonderful oratory is ſtill remembered by many of the inhabitants. His moſt noticeable addreſs here ſeems to have been at the reopening of the Baptiſt chapel

* See *Moſheim's Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory*.

in 1829, on the ſubject of "The power of Godlineſs." *Hall's* preaching has been not inaptly called "an illuminated ſtyle," attractive as much from the glittering raiment and glowing diction in which his thoughts were clothed as from the intenſity of the thoughts themſelves; but there was nothing of the tinſel about this: indeed, *Hall* denominated fancy preachers in general "ſhe men," or "pulpit *Beſſies*." The precocity of *Hall* when a boy was fully indicative of his gigantic attainments in after life---which, however, is by no means the rule with forward lads. His biographer tells us that he was wont to preach to his young companions when only ſeven years old; and it is alſo ſtated that he delivered a public diſcourſe at *Briſtol* when about fourteen, at which period it was clear he could not have abandoned his boyiſh love of fun, for about the ſame time he took the trouble to deſcend a chimney in North Street Academy, *Briſtol*, for the ſole purpoſe of frightening a *Welſh* ſtudent almoſt out of his wits. *Hall* is known to have had his ſplendid faculties beclouded for a time under that malady which has been called "the infirmity of noble minds." This is ſaid to have ariſen mainly from unrequited love; an accompliſhed lady of his acquaintance (Miſs *Steel*) having refuſed his offer. When ill in this ſtate he was ſeen by a former deacon of his,

for whom he never had a great affection; and in reply to his inquiry, as to what had brought him into that condition, he anſwered quickly, "What will never bring you to the ſame ſtate, ſir---too much brain, ſir." After his recovery his aſſiduous friends wiſhed him to marry, and recommended a lady whoſe over eagerneſs offended him ſo much that one day ſhe met with a ſad rebuff, which induced her to ſay, with all the bitterneſs of a diſappointed woman---"I am not poliſhed *ſteel* in your eyes, ſir." "No, ma'am," ſaid he, "not poliſhed ſteel; but I perceive you are burniſhed braſs, madam---burniſhed braſs." Of courſe he never married the lady. *Hall's* biographer tells us he was a man of great courage; but it ſeems he was not at all inſenſible to the inſtinct of ſelf-preſervation, as the following anecdote will ſhow. He was frequently invited to preach at the reopening of chapels, as at *Worceſter* and other places, and on more than one occaſion accepted invitations to preach at the Unitarians' chapel, *Briſtol* (on which occaſions he evinced great ingenuity to avoid giving offence). When Broadmead chapel, *Briſtol*, was enlarged in 1799, *Hall* (then at *Leiceſter*) was invited to preach at the reopening, and as it was naturally conjectured that he would appear in all his power and brilliance, the building was crowded to exceſs. A writer in a local paper, in deſcribing the circumſtance, ſays---

"He was equal to public expectation---great throughout; he was glorious in his concluſion; to uſe his own phraſe, he 'took the breath' from his auditors, ſome of whom, wiſhing to leave off with the laſt impreſſion of his eloquence freſh upon their minds, endeavoured, by a demonſtration which would only be tolerated in a place of nonconformiſt worſhip, to prevent the uſual cloſing hymn and prayer---they ſuddenly let down the reading flaps of their pews, as they do at the end of the ſervice, and theſe, being newly painted, made ſuch an unuſual crackling noiſe that an alarm was raiſed that the houſe was coming down. A cry that the galleries were falling, and another of 'fire!' aroſe, and a fearful ruſh was made to the doors. I do not know what the conſequences would have been had not Dr. *Ryland*, who ſat under the pulpit, with great preſence of mind, and in a voice heard above the ruſh and tumult, exclaimed that there was no danger and that the alarm was unfounded. Order was reſtored, and the Doctor took occaſion to offer a few ſolemn remarks upon the terror which had juſt been allayed, aſking them if they were ſo frightened and appalled at the alarm of a ſingle houſe falling, with what feelings would they be able to meet the wreck of matter and the craſh of worlds, or to hold up their heads amid the ruin and bruit of the Laſt Day? The application was fine, ſtriking, forcible; and Dr. *Ryland*, ſeeing the congregation was then in a mood to be diſmiſſed, turning round, but without looking up at the pulpit, ſaid, 'Mr. *Hall*, pleaſe give the benediction.' But no benediction followed: Mr. *Hall*, in the firſt alarm, on the principle of

ſauve qui peut, had cut, bolted, run; never, as the tradition goes, turning to look back at the imaginary conflagration until he reached Dr. *Ryland's* houſe on the hill, when he told Mrs. *Ryland* (as he no doubt firmly believed) that Broadmead was by that time a heap of ruins."

Mr. *Hall* had a great diſlike to formality and the "ſubject-propoſing" ſtyle. The authority whom I have quoted above relates that a ſtranger had been introduced to him when he was not in the mood and did not like his man: after ſeveral unſucceſsful attempts to "draw him out," the viſitor gravely propoſed the inquiry, "Whether, in a future ſtate, the powers of the human mind would not expand and be enlarged to an indefinite degree." *Hall* called out, "What is that, ſir? Which is that?" The queſtion being deliberately repeated with due emphaſis, he quickly replied, "Why ſo, ſir; why ſo? Why ſuppoſe the human mind indefinitely enlarged any more than the human body? And if the body is to undergo this frightful increaſe, then we ſhould have a man whoſe noſe would perforate the ſun, his chin ſtretching acroſs the *Atlantic*, and battles fought in the wrinkles of his face. He muſt be a fool, ſir, that can believe in that." The poor queriſt was completely dumbfounded by this *Johnſonian* thruſt. Of *Hall's* perſonal habits the moſt prominent was his paſſion for ſmoking, for which

indeed his peculiar bodily ailment was ſufficient cauſe. He would not go into any company, however elevated, where he could not have his pipe, becauſe he could never be at eaſe without it; but his temperance in ſpirituous liquors would have ſatisfied a teetotaller, though he was an inordinate drinker of tea: "Eighteen cups at a ſitting, ſir, and ſome in a baſin, was no unuſual allowance," ſaid a friend who had often been in his company. When in the pulpit he was ſo wrapt and abſtracted in his ſubject, that if he took up notes with him he invariably tore them in pieces, quite unconſciouſly to himſelf. In his table talk, when his brains were at work, he was equally oblivious as to what he was doing with his fingers. Once, after he had gone from the house, a lady miſſed her teaſpoons, and found them under the ſofa cuſhion, where *Hall* had inſenſibly ſtowed them away while engaged in converſation. Of his ſmoking, an anecdote is told, that after his "cloud" in the veſtry, on one occaſion, he perceived on going into the pulpit he had left his *Bible* behind him. He beckoned to the junior deacon and whiſpered, "Bring my *Bible*," but in ſo low a tone that the man thought he ſaid "my pipe." "What! into the pulpit, ſir?" aſked the aſtoniſhed deacon. "Yes, yes," replied *Hall* impatiently, "to be ſure, into the pulpit." The deacon went and

quickly returned, ſtealing up the pulpit ſtairs with ſomething under his coat. The preacher ſtooped to take his *Bible*, and, to his horror, ſaw a yard of clay inſtead --- fortunately, however, before any but a few in the immediate vicinity had noticed the circumſtance. *Hall* died in 1832, and his flock buried him in the building where thouſands had often hung upon his accents. The copyright of his works ſold for 4,000*l.*

Foſter was a man ſcarcely leſs eminent among the Baptiſt community. It has been juſtly ſaid that "he was great upon paper, and with as much mental power as would have furniſhed a dozen decent intellects, he yet was never attractive in the pulpit, and, by his own admiſſion, preached away nearly every auditory over whom he preſided." He was unintelligible or too profound for a mixed audience, and moreover his manners were miſanthropic and his habits unſociable, contemplative, and ſecluded; beſides which it appeared he had no ſettled creed beyond the broad and general principles of religion, and might as well have been of any other denomination as a Baptiſt; for in his life and correſpondence he admits that he had diſcarded the idea of eternal puniſhment, and was inclined to Arian doctrine. Indeed it is not improbable that the Baptiſts would have diſowned him had it not been for the *eclât* of his great abilities. A friend

of mine heard him preach in Silver Street chapel on the ſubject of "We brought nothing into the world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out;" and deſcribes it as "a *Chriſtless* ſermon, but full of amazing ability." He was a thin man, plainly dreſſed, and ſo regardleſs of externals as to wear a piece of packthread for a watch guard. Another friend who well remembers him declares that *Foſter* was "a ſtrange-looking being in whatever aſpect he was viewed---ſideways, back, or front." He was in the habit at one time of walking on Sundays from *Bourton* into *Winchcomb*, where he knew a Mr. *Fiſher*, and a ſhoemaker for whom he had a particular regard. At that time he uſually inveſted his outer man in a ſcratch wig, brown coat, red waiſtcoat, with black breeches, white ſtockings, and ſhoes to match, owing to the duſt. He occaſionally preached at *Winchcomb*, but no one in that enlightened village ever pretended to underſtand him. I have ſomewhere read of a preacher who once choſe for his ſubject a text from which to prove the exiſtence of an overruling Providence. In the courſe of his ſermon he ſtarted and anſwered objections which the ruſtic population had never before heard of. When he was leaving the church he found an old farmer waiting for him, who thus addreſſed him in great wrath: "Mr. *B*——, you are a

great ſcholard, they ſay---it may be zoa; but let me tell ye that, for all ye've ſaid this day, and for all ye can ſay, for my part I do believe there is a Providence." Mr. *Foſter* was equally unintelligible; but in his caſe the cauſe was his ſtyle being too ſuggeſtive, leading other people to think for themſelves, and merely opening to their mental perceptions ſo many lengthened viſtas of thought, adown which they were to penetrate by the force of their own efforts. But "the million" do not like this hard work; and hence, unleſs a preacher thinks for his hearers, he has but little chance of being popular. Yet one would think that *Foſter's* ſtyle muſt ſometimes have arouſed thoſe who had not entirely given way to dozing. In one of his ſermons at *Worceſter* he ſtartled his hearers by obſerving that "if they all had the power of carrying into effect their own wiſhes, how many dead bodies would be laid out in the morning!" This was a pretty direct ſlap for thoſe who wiſhed their rich relations were "fallen aſleep in *Jeſus*," not on account of the eternal peace and happineſs gained to the deceaſed, but for the pecuniary advantage of the ſurvivors. The preacher was right: if we only loved our friends as well before they die as we do afterwards, what a beatific world this would be! For ſoftening the heart, an hour's ſtroll in a graveyard is worth all the ſermons

that were ever preached.* *Foſter* was an implacable Radical, and ſo much did he diſlike the Eſtabliſhed Church that the mere ſight of a ſteeple offended him. A friend of his relates that on one occaſion, while walking with him between *Worceſter* and *Perſhore*, he pauſed to admire the ſplendid panoramic view ſtretched out before him. At length his attention being drawn to the diſtant time-worn tower of *Worceſter* Cathedral, on which the ſun was ſhining---"Aye, aye," ſaid he, waving his hand impatiently, "there ſhe is, ſure enough, the only ugly thing in the whole ſcene." *Foſter* profeſſed a great diſlike, too, for religioniſts and preachers in diſſenting ranks who made a merit of being ignorant---for their narrow views, their lazineſs of mind, and uncouth language; and his diſguſt at grimaces, poſtures, naſal intonation, cant ſlang, degrading traveſties and ſimiles, and the undue fulmination of the horrors of hell, was apparently unfeigned:

"You might often meet (ſays he) with a ſyſtematic writer, in whoſe hands the whole wealth, and variety, and magnificence of revelation ſhrink into a meagre liſt of doctrinal points, and who will let no verſe in the *Bible* tell its meaning, or preſume to have one, till it has taken its ſtand by one of thoſe points. You may meet with a

* Anonymous author.

Chriſtian polemic, who ſeems to value the arguments for evangelical truth as an aſſaſſin values his dagger, and for the ſame reaſon; with a deſcanter on the inviſible world, who makes you think of a Popiſh cathedral, and from the vulgarity of whoſe illuminations you are glad to eſcape into the ſolemn twilight of faith; or with a grim zealot for ſuch a theory of the Divine attributes and government as ſeems to delight in repreſenting the Deity as a dreadful king of furies, whoſe dominion is overſhaded with vengeance, whoſe muſic is the cries of victims, and whoſe glory requires to be illuſtrated by the ruin of his creation."

Foſter's famous eſſays (which have gone through numerous editions) were written at *Frome*---which ſome one has compared to a cart-load of ſtones thrown into a pit. Strange to ſay, theſe ſame eſſays were but amplifications of epiſtles addreſſed to the lady whom he afterwards married, and a very odd kind of love letters they certainly were; inſtead of flames, and darts, and vows, we have profound ſpeculations on popular ignorance, and the connection of cauſe and effect abſtruſely traced. She is ſaid to have been a frigid, ſtately ſort of philoſopher in petticoats, bearing the unromantic name of *Maria Snook*. Yet her miſanthropic huſband murmured mournfully at her death.* He died at *Stapleton*, near *Briſtol*, October 15th, 1843, at the age of ſeventy-three.

* See *Briſtol Church-goer*.

Society of Friends.

"THIS world is a form; our bodies are forms; and no viſible act of devotion can be without forms. But yet the leſs form in religion the better, ſince *God* is a ſpirit; for the more mental our worſhip, the more adequate to the nature of *God;* the more ſilent, the more ſuitable to the language of a ſpirit. Words are for others, not for ourſelves; nor for *God*, who hears not as bodies do, but as ſpirits ſhould. If we would know this dialect, we muſt learn of the divine principle in us. As we hear the dictates of that, ſo *God* hears us."

WILLIAM PENN.

IN the religious phenomena of the ſeventeenth century the eſtabliſhment of Quakeriſm ſtands out as one of the moſt prominent features; and in the mighty ebullition of public opinion which then ſhook ſociety to its foundation, among the landmarks around which men began to rally, none were more conſpicuous than that ſet up by *George Fox*. (Be it underſtood that I uſe the term Quaker in the preſent chapter not in the contemptuous ſenſe of its originator, Mr. Juſtice *Bennett*, of *Derby*, but for the ſake of convenience, and becauſe it ſeems

that both *Fox* and his followers adopted the deſignation without much demur.) The original Quakers were a very different ſet of men from their paſſive, quiet, and reſpectable deſcendants of the preſent day, for while evincing the courage of primitive martyrs in long endurance of every kind of obloquy, ſuffering, and wrong, they carried an aggreſſive warfare into the camp of the enemy, violently denounced and challenged the ſteeple-houſe prieſt in his own pulpit, bearded the judge in his chair, and ſhrank not from uſing the plaineſt language even to the Majeſty of *England*. In ſuch an age of extreme opinions no wonder that enthuſiaſm became developed into fanaticiſm, and that we read of a *William Sympſon* running naked through the ſtreets of *Eveſham* and other towns "as a prophetic warning to the people," and a *James Nailor* at *Briſtol* riding on a white horſe and profeſſing himſelf to be *Chriſt*. Theſe extravagances, however, muſt not be charged againſt the whole ſect, any more than the mummeries of the middle ages may be ſet down to the ſcore of Chriſtianity. Moreover, both *William Penn*, and *Fox* himſelf to ſome extent, diſcountenanced theſe vagaries, nor was *Nailor* again received into membership with the Quakers till he had recanted his follies.

Calamy (who was a partiſan oppoſed to them) ſays of the Quakers---

"Their principal zeal lieth in railing at miniſters, as hireling deceivers and falſe prophets, and in refuſing to ſwear before magiſtrates. At firſt they uſed to fall into trembling and ſometimes vomiting in their meetings, and pretended to be violently actuated by the Spirit; but now that has ceaſed; they only meet, and he that pretendeth to be moved by the Spirit ſpeaketh, and ſometimes they ſay nothing, but ſit an hour or more in ſilence and then depart. One while ſeveral of them went naked through many chief towns and cities of the land, as a prophetical act. Some of them having famiſhed and drowned themſelves in melancholy, others have undertaken by the power of the Spirit to raiſe them, as *Suſan Pierſon* did at *Claines*, near *Worceſter*, when they took a man out of his grave who had ſo made himſelf away, and commanded him to ariſe and live; but to their ſhame. Their chief leader, *Jas. Naylor*, acted the part of *Chriſt* at *Briſtol*, according to much of the hiſtory of the Goſpel, and was long laid in Bridewell for it, and had his tongue bored as a blaſphemer by the Parliament. Many Franciſcan friars and other Papiſts have been proved to be diſguiſed ſpeakers in their aſſemblies; but *William Penn*, their modern leader, hath undertaken the reforming the ſect, and ſet up a kind of miniſtry among them."

The origin of Quakers may be dated from about the year 1650. Their founder, *George Fox*, was born in 1624; he was an unuſually grave and thoughtful youth, and after a ſucceſſion of religious experiences, ſome of which

were of the moſt ſevere and trying character, he arrived at thoſe convictions which he believed he was ſent by *God* to propagate. His articles of faith were few: morality, mutual charity, and the love of *God*, being the fundamental principles on which he mainly inſiſted. The religion and worſhip he recommended were ſimple and without ceremonies: to wait in profound ſilence for the influence of the Spirit was one of the chief points he inculcated; and it has been ſaid of him and his followers that they accounted ordinances as things which had ariſen out of the bottomleſs pit, and ceremonies the invention of fallen man and mere tradition. An utter excluſion of all ſtatuary, all picture, all architecture, all ritual, all ſpoken prayer, was their practice; they had no eye for the beautiful in form, no ear for the muſical in ſound, no ſoul for the eloquent and ſublime in the offices of thankſgiving, meditation, inſtruction, and prayer. In their violent onſlaughts on the eſtabliſhed clergy and other denominations (for they were peculiarly hoſtile to Baptiſts and Independents, and gathered numerous converts from their ranks) they made the great miſtake of conſidering that whatſoever was uſeleſs or diſtaſteful to themſelves muſt be of neceſſity equally ſo in the eſtimation of Him who has obviouſly made His creatures to differ as to their taſtes and preferences in circumſtantials,

that they may ſtill more cloſely and delightedly agree in the eſſentials of filial love towards Him and fraternal affection for each other. The Quaker, wrapt in his ſpiritual exaltation, would have deprived his weaker brethren in the fleſh of thoſe adjuncts and incentives to piety which the taſtes, the affections, and the ſenſes of a highly cultivated nature can ſupply, and without which their Chriſtianity might frequently remain torpid, and cold, and dim. Devotional appliances (if not confounded with eſſentials) have undoubtedly their true uſe in meeting the requirements of thoſe to whoſe nature and conſtitution they are peculiarly applicable; and while it is admitted that the humbleſt brick building may contain many worſhippers of *God* in ſpirit and in truth, let it never be believed that ſplendid architecture, muſic, and indeed the arts and ſciences generally, may not be rendered ſubſervient to and the handmaids of religion.

The founders of new ſects muſt neceſſarily be extraordinary men, but *Fox* was peculiarly ſo. In his youth, when in diſtreſs of mind, he applied to miniſters of various denominations, but found no relief from any. The prieſt of *Mancetter* preſcribed tobacco and pſalm ſinging, but *Fox* did not love the one, and was not in a ſtate to do the other. At a very early period of his experience he came to the deciſion that an *Oxford* or

Cambridge education was not ſufficient to qualify a man to become a miniſter of *Chriſt;* and when at length he had arrived at thoſe convictions by which he made his peace with *God*, it is marvellous to note with what a right good will he proceeded to work. Entering pariſh churches ("ſteeple-houſes," as he called them)---for whenever a bell ſounded in his ear for ſervice he was "moved againſt the black earthly ſpirit of the prieſt," alleging that it was "like a market bell to gather people together, that the prieſt might ſet forth his wares to ſell"---he would cry againſt "the great idol (the church) and againſt the worſhippers therein." Arriving near *Lichfield* on one occaſion, and ſeeing the ſpires of the city, "the word of the *Lord* came to me," ſays he, and over hedge and ditch he went in the ſtraighteſt line poſſible till he came thither; and the *Lord* having commanded him to pull off his ſhoes, he did ſo, leaving them with ſome ſhepherds juſt out of the city; then he walked through the ſtreets, crying "Woe to the bloody city of *Lichfield*," having in his eye the early *Britiſh* Chriſtians who were ſaid to have been murdered there in the time of *Diocletian*. At *Hotham* church he was moved of the *Lord* to ſay to the prieſt, "Come down, thou deceiver; doſt thou bid people to come freely and take of the water of life, and yet thou takeſt 300*l.* a

year of them for preaching the Scriptures. Mayeſt thou not bluſh for ſhame?" When on a viſit to *Warnſworth* church, the prieſt ſaw him and left off preaching, with the remark addreſſed to *Fox*, "What have you to ſay?" And the intruder was about to anſwer, when the people ruſhed upon him, thruſt him out, and ſeverely beat him. He fearleſſly "laid open" all ſects of Chriſtians; taunted the Preſbyterians, when they concealed their devotional meetings under a ſhow of pipes and ale, that although they had perſecuted others they flinched from it themſelves; and when the Ranters of that day took tobacco and drank ale at their meetings, ſung, whiſtled, and danced, as a part of their religion, he ſo handled them that "at laſt it became a dreadful thing to them when it was told them 'the man in leathern breeches is come.'" *Fox* denounced idol temples, tithes, oaths, all kinds of earthly honours and pleaſures, ſports, recreations, and fine attire. He proteſted againſt "gaudy apparel and ſtore of ribbons hanging about men's waiſts, knees, and on their hats, of divers colours, red, with black or yellow, and their powdered hair---women with their gold, their patches on their faces, noſes, cheeks, foreheads---their rings, their cuffs, double under and above, their ribbons tied about their hands, and three or four gold laces about their clothes."

He wrote epiſtles to prieſts, judges, jurymen, and even to the King himſelf and to foreign princes, attended fairs, wakes, and races, where, ſays he (believing himſelf to be inſpired) "ſo dreadful was the power of *God* upon me that the people flew like chaff before me into their houſes." At *Ulverſton* church, where he "ſpoke like a hammer," the building "ſhook ſo that prieſt *Bennett* was afraid and trembled, and haſtened out for fear it ſhould fall on his head." There muſt have been ſomething ſuperhuman in *Fox's* countenance, for the effect of his glance was ſaid to be irreſiſtible. A Baptiſt deacon, who had the misfortune to be ſeverely caſtigated by him, cried out, "Do not pierce me ſo with thy eyes; keep thy eyes off me." *Fox* confeſſed that "he felt diſpoſed greatly to thraſh the chaffy light minds of the Baptiſts," and once he tried his hand with *Tombes*, who maintained that the inner light of man was a natural light, while *Fox* inſiſted that it was divine; and a ſore diſputation they had, in which both parties claimed the victory. *Fox* would take in hand any notoriouſly bad man, and ſeldom leave him before he had made ſome impreſſion, as was the caſe with one *Mansfield*, who, at the cloſe of their interview, is ſaid "to have had ſcarcely any ſtrength left in him." Again, he has been known to go boldly up to robbers and admoniſh them in the

power of the *Lord* till they were glad to get away from him. He even ventured to counſel *Cromwell* himſelf on the ſubject of toleration and his propoſed aſſumption of the kingly office. The Protector had the good ſenſe to take his remonſtrances kindly, and as the Quaker was leaving his preſence, *Cromwell*, with tears in his eyes, ſaid, "Come again to my houſe, for if thou and I were but an hour of a day together we ſhould be nearer to one another." One of *Fox's* doctrines was that of perfectibility: he profeſſed to feel himſelf pure, innocent, and righteous---could "ſee into the inviſible creation of *God:*" wonderful depths opened to him, ſo that he could diſcern all the creatures of *God;* he profeſſed to know the occult influences of phyſic and to diſcern ſpirits, as alſo the characters of men; believed that he was commiſſioned by *God* and travelled in His power, having been aſſured by the *Lord* that his name was written in the Lamb's book of life; moreover he felt himſelf forbidden to put off his hat, to bid people "good morrow," or bow, or ſcrape with his leg. Great was the rage of prieſts, magiſtrates, profeſſors, and people of all ſorts, at this want of reſpect, and on one occaſion *George Fox's* primitive language brought down the following rough rejoinder: "Thou me! thou my dog! If thou thoueſt me I'll thou thy teeth down thy throat!"

Fox's love of the ſupernatural was quite equal to that of the eccleſiaſtics in the middle ages: he profeſſed to ſee viſions, diſcern ſpirits, and work miracles. *James Claypole*, of *London*, had a dreadful fit of the ſtone; the Quaker laid his hand on him, and prayed the *Lord* to rebuke the infirmity, whereupon "the *Lord's* power went through him, he felt eaſe, quickly fell aſleep, the ſtone came from him like dirt, and the next day he rode twenty-five miles in a coach." *Fox* cured one *Richard Myer*, a lame man, by ſimply telling him in the name of the *Lord* to ſtand on his legs; and at *Mansfield* a diſtracted woman became quiet at his bidding. The gaoler at *Leiceſter* was in the habit of ſetting his maſtiff upon ſuch of the priſoners as he ſaw praying, but if any of them happened to be Quakers the dog refuſed, and took the ſtaff out of his maſter's hand! *Fox* was once ſtruck on the hand with a carpenter's rule, which ſo benumbed the limb as to render it uſeleſs, until "looking at it in the love of *God*, in a moment the arm recovered ſtrength." The prieſts raiſed reports that neither water could drown him, nor could they draw blood from him, and therefore he muſt be a witch; and no wonder that in ſuch an age the commonalty believed it. At ſome place in *Yorkſhire* the people came profeſſedly to kill him, but could not becauſe they believed he had bewitched

them. *Fox* had a viſion of the Protector's death ſhortly before it happened, and ſeven years before the Great Fire of *London* he ſaw the city, in his mind's eye, reduced to aſhes, as it afterwards appeared! A fortnight before the Long Parliament was broken up he foreſaw it, and alſo that the Speaker would be plucked from his chair. He foretold the defeat of the *Turks* when it was feared they would overrun *Chriſtendom;* and on one occaſion in his chamber he ſaw the angel of the *Lord* with a drawn ſword towards the ſouth, and ſoon afterwards a war broke out with *Holland.* He diſcerned an unclean ſpirit in a woman at a village in *Yorkſhire*, ſpoke ſharply to her, and ſhe left the room, the people wondering, for they knew her to be a notorious character; and one *Gritton*, a Baptiſt fortune teller, he ſent flying out of a houſe at *Luton*, *Bedfordſhire*, ſo that he came no more amongſt them.

The ſufferings of this extraordinary man were incredible, in hunger and thirſt, buffettings, ſtocks, impriſonment, horſewhipping, and cudgellings. He lay at times under hayſtacks, in woods, or furze buſhes, during rain or ſnow, or in dirty alehouſes, where he met with the roughеſt of human kind, and occaſionally experienced much danger from them; he was hunted hither and thither like a felon or outcaſt, yet inſtead of hiding or abſconding he always boldly confronted

his enemies. The prieſts incited the people to introduce rotten eggs and wildfire and to beat drums at his meetings, and once he was ſo beaten as to be left for dead on a watery common. "Oh," ſays he, "the blows, punchings, beatings, and impriſonments, that we underwent for not putting off our hats to men. Some had their hats violently plucked off and thrown away, ſo that they loſt them." *Fox* was impriſoned at *Worceſter*, *Derby*, and in many other gaols. At *Launceſton*, in 1656, he was put into a priſon called "Doomſdale," where murderers were confined, and where their filth had not been cleaned out for years, ſo that he ſtood over his ſhoes in it, and neither bed nor ſtraw was allowed him, ſo that he had to ſtand all night; at length he procured a little ſtraw, and burnt it to take away the ſtench of his cell, but in doing ſo he nearly ſuffocated the gaoler ſleeping in an upper ſtory, who thereupon promptly revenged himſelf by pouring down upon the Quaker a large quantity of offenſive liquid, ſo that he narrowly eſcaped drowning. *Fox* ſuffered much on account of his refuſing to take up arms againſt the King at *Worceſter* fight. Juſtice *Bennett*, of *Derby*, ſent conſtables to preſs him for a ſoldier on that occaſion, but having refuſed both money and threats, he was committed to a cloſe confinement at *Derby*. A trooper whom he converted there

was at the Battle of *Worceſter* in the following year (1651), and when the two armies lay near one another two ſoldiers came out from the King's army and challenged any two of the Parliamentary army to fight with them, whereupon this trooper's colonel made choice of him and another to anſwer the challenge; in the encounter the trooper's companion was ſlain, but he (*Fox's* convert) drove both his enemies within muſket ſhot of the town without firing a piſtol at them! This circumſtance he narrated to *Fox* with his own mouth, "but when the fight was over he ſaw the deceit and hypocriſy of the officers, and being ſenſible how wonderfully the *Lord* had preſerved him, and ſeeing alſo to the end of fighting, he laid down his arms."

The founder of the Quakers firmly believed in the doctrine of retribution in this life, and while recording the frightful treatment experienced by "*Chriſt's* lambs," and the heavy hand laid upon "the *Lord's* plants," he dwells with apparent ſatisfaction upon the inſtances which came to his knowledge of the righteous judgments of *God* upon the evil-doer. One who had falſely accuſed *Fox* of paſſing himſelf off as *Chriſt*, he retorted upon by calling him a *Judas*, and declaring that he ſhould meet with *Judas's* end, which he did ſhortly after by hanging himſelf. Juſtice *Sawrey*, another perſecutor, was

drowned. At *Droitwich*, in 1670, *Fox* ſays in his journal, "*W. Cartwright* was at a friend's houſe, and being moved of the *Lord* to ſpeak a few words before he ſat to ſupper, there came an informer and ſtood hearkening under the window. He got a warrant to diſtrain the friend's goods, under the pretence that there was a meeting there; but as he came back with the warrant he fell off his horſe and broke his neck." A rude butcher at *Halifax*, who had ſworn to kill *Fox*, and was accuſtomed to thruſt out his tongue in deriſion at Quakers, had that member ſo ſwollen that he could never draw it in again, and died ſo! And in *Somerſetſhire* a man who was lolling out his tongue at them in the ſtreet, attracted a bull which had juſt got away from a baiting, and the animal ſtruck his horn under the man's chin and thruſt his tongue out of his mouth, juſt as he had been accuſtomed to put it in deriſion! A Captain *Drury*, who was in the habit of ſcoffing at the Quakers on account of their alleged trembling, was one night in bed ſeized with ſuch a trembling that his joints knocked together, and he was ſo ſhaken that he had not ſtrength to riſe. Feeling the power of the *Lord* on him, he tumbled off the bed, and cried out that he would never more ſpeak againſt the Quakers! Juſtice *Bennett* (before mentioned), who was an Independent, had committed *Fox* to

priſon, and had deriſively given him and his followers the denomination of Quakers, becauſe *Fox* had bade him tremble at the word of the *Lord*, afterwards declared that ſome plague was upon his houſe and the whole town of *Derby* on account of *Fox's* impriſonment, and accordingly, when the latter had been in gaol for nearly a year, they turned him out.

More of *Fox's* hiſtory will have to be glanced at in the following pages; but as what remains will be entirely in connection with the hiſtory of the Quakers of *Worceſter* city and county, it muſt come on in chronological order. It may now, therefore, ſuffice to add that *Fox* died in the year 1690, in his ſixty-ſeventh year---a good old age, when we conſider the cruel buffettings to which for many years he had been expoſed, and his inceſſant labours, not only in the United Kingdom, but in *America*, *Germany*, *Holland*, *&c.*

It ſhould be premiſed that although *Cromwell*, General *Monk*, *Charles II*, and *James II*, were all, more or leſs, in favour of toleration---though for widely different reaſons---the unfortunate Quakers were almoſt as bitterly perſecuted as the Catholics throughout the greateſt portion of that period. The rival ſects, when they obtained power in Parliament, were headſtrong and violent, againſt the expreſſed wiſh of the

Protector; the Long Parliament was eſpecially cruel to the Quakers; and after the reſtoration of the kingly authority the frequent recurrence of plots and other cauſes prevented the extenſion of that toleration which otherwiſe they might have gradually obtained. With regard to *Cromwell*, he is known to have had a ſtrong bias in favour of *Fox* and his followers, and never turned a deaf ear to them but at the inſtigation of ſome rival ſect. A Quaker merchant once applied to him for redreſs, his veſſel having been ſeized and confiſcated on the coaſt of *France*. The Protector ſent him with a letter to Cardinal *Mazarin*, demanding compenſation within three days, or to return. Shortly afterwards the Quaker again preſented himſelf before *Cromwell*, who ſaid, "Well friend, haſt thou thy money?" "No," was the reply. "Then take no further trouble." The Protector ſeized the firſt two *French* ſhips within his reach, indemnified the Quaker, and paid the ſurplus to the *French* ambaſſador.

The firſt recorded viſit of *George Fox* to *Worceſterſhire* was in 1655. He had heard that the magiſtrates of *Eveſham* had caſt ſeveral of his followers into priſon, and that, hearing of his coming, they had made a pair of high ſtocks for the occaſion. This, of courſe, only whetted *Fox's* appetite to go, and he ſent for *Edward*

Pittaway, a Quaker who lived near *Eveſham*, who informed him that the rumour was quite true. At night the two went into the town, and in the evening (ſays he) "we had a large and precious meeting." Next morning he rode to one of the priſons, and encouraged the friends there, among whom was *Humphrey Smith*, who had been a prieſt, but was then a "free miniſter of *Chriſt*." When *Fox* had viſited both priſons, and was going out of the town, he eſpied the magiſtrates coming to ſeize him, "but the *Lord* fruſtrated their intent, and the innocent eſcaped their ſnare, for *God's* power came over them all; but exceeding rude and envious were the prieſts and profeſſors about this time in thoſe parts." He went from *Eveſham* to *Worceſter*, "and had a precious meeting there, and quiet; after which, coming towards an inn, ſome profeſſors fell to diſcourſe with the friends, and were like to have made a tumult in the city. As we went into the inn, they all clattered into the yard, but I went among them and got them quieter. Next day I walked into the town, and had a great deal of diſcourſe with ſome of the profeſſors concerning *Chriſt* and the way of truth. One of them denied that *Chriſt* was of *Abraham* according to the fleſh, and that he was declared to be the Son of *God* according to the ſpirit. I proved, from *Romans* i, that he was of the ſeed of *Abraham*,

being made of the ſeed of *David* according to the fleſh, and that according to the ſpirit he was declared to be the Son of *God*. Afterwards I wrote a paper concerning it. From *Worceſter* we went to *Tewkeſbury*," where he had a ſtiff conteſt with the prieſt.

The above-named viſit to *Worceſter* was probably the occaſion when a Society of Friends was regularly organiſed here, although the oldeſt document, and evidently the firſt minute book ever kept by them, does not commence till 1673.

In thoſe days, the magiſtrates as a body, and eſpecially thoſe of *Eveſham*, ſeem to have been men without law, juſtice, or humanity; and the perſecutions which the unfortunate Quakers underwent at their hands in the neighbouring borough are a deep diſgrace to the adminiſtration of the law. According to *Beſſe's Sufferings* (publiſhed 1753, and from which much of my material has been gathered) *Samuel Garner* and *Robert Martin* were moſt violent and oppreſſive as juſtices, and excited mobs to hoot, throw ſtones and dirt, ſo that the Quakers' lives were endangered; then they were thrown into horrid dungeons, where no friends were permitted to viſit them. At *Eveſham* fair, on the 10th of September, 1655, Juſtice *Martin* cauſed the people to pelt them with ſhovels of dirt; he alſo ſeized their books and burnt them at the Market

Croſs. A repreſentation of theſe grievances was forwarded to *Cromwell*, but not with much effect, except that *Humphrey Smith* and *Thomas Cartwright* were examined before the mayor and magiſtrates for having publiſhed the paper in which they had repreſented their caſe to the Protector; and ſubſequently they, and *Joſhua Frenſhaw*, *John Knight*, and others, were tried before the Recorder, *Robert Atkins*, at the ſeſſions. One chief objection was their refuſing to ſhow any one reſpect by removing their hats, but *Wall* remarked to the objecting party, "Thou haſt not yet made me any ſatisfaction for the laſt hat thou cauſedſt to be taken from me, neither is it reſtored to me." The offenders were ordered back to gaol from ſeſſions to ſeſſions, till they ſhould appear without their hats, though they aſſerted there was no command in Scripture nor any national law for putting off the hat. When they were charged with being Quakers, *H. Smith* declared that the prophet *Moſes* was one; and *R. Smith* was charged with calling *George Hopkins*, the prieſt, a liar, which he ſtill ſaid he was willing to prove; the prieſt made no anſwer. At length they were all heavily fined, but afterwards the fines were reſcinded and the priſoners diſcharged by order of the Protector, through Major-General *Berry*, who dates the order from *Worceſter*, September 1, 1656. The priſoners'

goods alſo, which had been taken away by the ſheriff, were reſtored on application to *Cromwell*. *Smith*, one of the ſufferers, publiſhed a printed ſheet, of what they had undergone, from which it appeared they had been kept a long time in a dark dungeon, on bread and water; no bedding nor ſtraw to lie on, without paying the gaoler money; a pillow was even denied to one poor wretch ſuffering from the toothache. They were fourteen weeks in one dungeon, twelve feet ſquare, which was not once cleaned out during that time, and the ſmell was ſo bad, even in the ſtreet, that the people could not endure to ſtand by it. In hot days ſome of the priſoners lay like dead men, their breath being almoſt ſtopped; and in cold nights there was neither room nor material to make a fire, nor ſpace to walk in. Their wretched food was handed in through a four-inch wide hole in the wall, and no friends were permitted to viſit them. When two countrymen, paſſing by with their teams, requeſted to ſee them, the gaoler locked them in, nor did they regain their liberty without a conſiderable fee. At *Eveſham* female Quakers were put in the ſtocks in a moſt brutal and indecent manner, ſometimes a whole day and night together in a freezing atmoſphere, and then were ordered to quit the town. Any remonſtrance with the mayor uſually reſulted in another application of

the ſtocks. This redoubtable mayor was *Edward Young*.

I am informed that the old cell, or priſon, at *Eveſham*, where the poor Quakers were confined, is ſtill in exiſtence, under the end of an old dwelling-houſe as you enter the churchyard from the market place, and cloſe to the church gates. At preſent, the ſhop over it is uſed by a coachmaker, and the cell or cellar is a receptacle for coals and lumber. It is about twenty-two feet ſquare and from ſix feet to ſeven feet high. There is a ſtrong ſtone wall or buttreſs at one end, about four feet thick, but whether intended as a ſupport to the roof, or as a diviſion of the place for two claſſes of inmates, is not now known. The ceiling has been removed. There are ſome receſſes in the walls, and one narrow grating looking into the roadway. An old entrance from the market place down ſome ſtone ſteps has been blocked up. Altogether the cell is as comfortleſs a place as can be well imagined.

Nor was *Worceſter* much behind in the work of perſecution. In the year of *Fox's* viſit to this city (1655), "*Thomas Goodaire*, for ſpeaking to *Richard Baxter* after he had ended his ſermon at *Worceſter*, was ſent to priſon; he was alſo impriſoned at another time for aſking a prieſt (probably (*Baxter*) a queſtion in the ſteeple-houſe at *Kidderminſter*." Alſo in 1655, "*Richard Farnſ-*

worth was haled out of the ſteeple-houſe at *Worceſter* for aſking *Baxter* a ſober queſtion," for the prieſts of thoſe times choſe rather to ſtop the mouths than ſatisfy the doubts of religious inquirers. It will be ſeen in an earlier part of this work that *Baxter* (who was ſtationed at *Kidderminſter*) occaſionally preached in *Worceſter* Cathedral, when the Independents or Preſbyterians had poſſeſſion of that edifice.

In the year 1656 *Fox* again viſited *Eveſham*, but there is no account of his coming on to *Worceſter*. *Henry Fowler*, for viſiting his friends in priſon in that year, was himſelf alſo put in confinement; many others were impriſoned for non-payment of tithes; and *Jane Hicks*, of *Chadwich*, was ſent to priſon at *Worceſter* for ſome offence which the prieſt of *King's Norton* took at her ſpeaking to him. Next year, *John Biſſell*, for refuſing to pay the prieſt 10*s.* for tithe, had goods taken from him worth 1*l.* 5*s.*; *Thomas Allington*, for going into one of the public places of worſhip, where he ſtood ſtill and ſpoke not a word, was ſet in the ſtocks; and *Edward Bourne*, for exhorting the people in the College at *Worceſter* to fear the *Lord* and repent, was committed to priſon, where he remained thirteen weeks. The Cathedral was at that time occupied by Mr. *Simon Moore*, a Preſbyterian [Independent?] preacher, who had taken poſſeſſion of

the principal pulpit in the city on the ejection of the church clergy.---(See page 92.) In 1658, *Jane Hicks* (who has been already mentioned) was brought to *Worceſter* priſon from *Bromſgrove*, where ſhe had been ſeveral times "concerned to bear her teſtimony to the truth to the people aſſembled at their places of public worſhip." This poor woman, it ſeems, was placed four times in the ſtocks, once for a whole night and part of two days. This year, *Fox* addreſſed an epiſtle to his friends at *Worceſter*, which was as follows:

"Friends, every one of you having a light from the *Son of God*, wait in it, that you may come to receive the *Son of God*, from whence it comes, and receive power from Him to become the ſons of *God*, and have faith in Him; for who are of faith are of *Abraham's* ſeed, which faith gives the victory over the world. It is by faith our hearts are purified; ſo dwell in the light which caſts out all jangling ſpirits, in which ye may have united one with another and with *Chriſt*, from whence the light comes, and with the *Father*, whom He is the way to, and that with the light ye may anſwer the light in every man (which comes from *Chriſt*), though they hate it. So the *Lord God Almighty* keep and preſerve you, and all keep your meetings in the power of *God*, that the *Lord* ye may ſee preſent among you.---*G. F.*"

One of *Fox's* addreſſes, dated from his reſi-

dence at *Swarthmore*, in 1676, is copied into the *Worceſter* Quakers' minute book, but the epiſtle was not addreſſed to *Worceſter*: it ſeems to have been intended for Quakers generally, or elſe for thoſe of *Maryland* and *Virginia*.

Perſecution was now more and more violent, and, as uſual, in the ſame proportion the Quakers exhibited their firmneſs, which at times approached to fanaticiſm. *William Sympſon*, in 1659, paſſed naked through the ſtreets of *Eveſham*, "in a prophetic manner, as a ſign to the people there, but was whipped on the back and breaſt by an envious minded man of that place."

This *Sympſon* imagined "that he was moved of the *Lord* to go at ſeveral times, for three years, naked and barefoot through cities, towns, market places, and into prieſts' houſes, as a ſign that they ſhould be ſtripped as he was; ſometimes he put on ſackcloth and beſmeared his face, ſaying that *God* would beſmear all their religion as he was beſmeared." Many a horſewhipping, ſtoning, and impriſonment, did *Sympſon* endure in carrying out his groſſly-indecent and ſelf-impoſed taſk. The idea, which was probably derived remotely from the practice of ſome of the prophets in the Old Teſtament, was alſo acted upon by one *Robert Huntingdon*, who went into *Carliſle* ſteeple-houſe with a white ſheet on, among Preſbyterians and Independents, to ſhow that the ſurplice was coming

up again; and he put on a halter to indicate further what mode of exit from this world ſome of them might probably adopt. Others carried lanterns and candles into the churches, as indicative of the exiſting mental and ſpiritual darkness.

Samuel Horton (1659), "hearing the prieſt at *Eveſham* aſſert in his ſermon that *Abraham's* grace was imperfect, was concerned to oppoſe that anti-Scriptural doctrine, was ſet in the ſtocks for three hours, and then ſent to priſon." Same year, *Robert Widder*, "for ſpeaking the words of truth to *Baxter*, in the ſteeple-houſe at *Kidderminſter*, was impriſoned there, as alſo was *William Pitt*, of *Worceſter*, who accompanied him; and *Nicholas Blackmore*, *William Pitt*, and *John Waite*, paſſing from *Worceſter* to *Kidderminſter*, were ſet in the ſtocks there, under pretence of their having broken the Sabbath by travelling on that day;" and *John Giles*, "for aſking a prieſt at *Alchurch* to prove infant baptiſm, was ſet in the ſtocks for ſeven hours." Poor *Baxter*, with all his love of diſputation and controverſy, ſeems to have been fairly worn out by the attacks of the Quakers, and complained bitterly of the treatment he received at their hands. "They have oft (ſays he) come into the congregation when I had liberty to preach *Chriſt's* goſpel, and carried it againſt me as a deceiver of the people. They have followed me home, crying out in the

ſtreets, 'The day of the *Lord* is coming, when thou ſhalt periſh as a deceiver.' They have ſtood in my market place and under my window, year after year, crying to the people, 'Take heed of your prieſts; they deceive your ſouls;' and if they ſaw any one wear lace or neat clothing they cried out to me, 'Theſe are the fruits of thy miniſtry!' And *Baxter* expreſſes his opinion pretty freely as to what they would have done had it been in their power. The Quakers were hoſtile to the *Worceſter* county petition, got up by *Baxter* in 1652, in favour of a ſtanding miniſtry and the preſervation of the Univerſities. *Fox* attacked it in a pamphlet entitled, *The Three-fold State of Anti-Chriſt*. This brought *Baxter* into the field with a defence, and there was not the ſhadow of a compromiſe on either ſide, as may well be ſuppoſed by thoſe who are acquainted with the character of the combatants. The Quakers were never known to ſurrender. The governor of *Dover* Caſtle, when the King aſked him if he had diſperſed all the ſectaries, ſaid, "Yes, except the Quakers, whom the devil could not diſperſe; for if he impriſoned them and broke up their meetings they would meet again; and if he knocked them down or killed them they would meet and reſiſt again." *George Whitehead*, a Quaker, who viſited *Worceſterſhire* in 1657, had a fierce contention with the Bap-

tiſts, but (ſays he) "the *Lord* ſtood by me and ſtrengthened me to ſtand againſt and over all the oppoſition and contention which I met with or ſtood in my way. At *Worceſter* city I had a large meeting, where I met with ſome oppoſition, and one time from ſome profeſſors, divers perſons of note being preſent; but the diſpute was ſoon over, for they could not maintain their oppoſition, and the truth prevailed over them to the convincing of many; and the *Lord* being preſent with me in my teſtimony for His name, gave me ſuitable anſwers by His immediate power and Spirit, opening matters in vindication of the truth of the goſpel, which he had given me a diſpenſation of, to bear witneſs to His love and grace, and to turn people thereunto in their own hearts and conſciences." He alſo had a large meeting in an orchard at *Clifton-on-Teme*.

The year of the reſtoration of royalty (1660) witneſſed no mitigation of the Quakers' ſufferings. *Fox*, in that year, paſſed from *Tewkesbury* to *Worceſter*, "and never (ſays he) did I ſee ſuch drunkenneſs as was then in the towns, for they had been chooſing Parliament men at *Worceſter*. The *Lord's* truth was ſet over all (his favourite expreſſion); people were finely ſettled therein, and friends praiſed the *Lord*; nay, I ſaw the very earth rejoiced; yet great fears and troubles were on many, looking for the King's coming in

(Charles II), and that all things ſhould be altered. They would aſk me what I thought of times and things. I told them the *Lord's* power was over all---His light ſhined over all, and that fear would take hold only on the hypocrite, ſuch as had not been faithful to *God*, and on our perſecutors." On December 23, of the ſame year (1660), *Richard Fidoe*, *William Stevens*, *William Hall*, *Joſhua Wannerton*, and *Richard Wall*, going to viſit one of their friends, were impriſoned at *Worceſter*, and afterwards carried before the magiſtrates, who tendered them the oath of allegiance, and upon their refuſal to take it they were recommitted to priſon. Next day, *Robert Smith*, *William Pitt*, *Nicholas Blackmore*, *John Townſend*, *John Waite*, *Thomas Ball*, *Edward Stanton*, *William Meakin*, *Gervas Pearſon*, *Francis Clark*, *John Clark*, *Abraham Roberts*, *Thomas Jukes*, *Abraham Annes*, *George Knight*, and *Thomas Waite*, were taken out of a peaceable meeting, and carried before Major *Wild*, who tendered them the oath, and on their refuſing to ſwear, he ſent them to priſon, without expreſſing in their mittimus any cauſe for his ſo doing. At *Worceſter* Seſſions, January 8, 1660-1, forty-ſeven of the Quakers were tendered the oath, refuſed it, and were committed to priſon. Their names were, *Robert Newcomb*, *Thomas Carter*, *Edward Gibbs*, *John Bennett*, *Thomas Cadick*, *William*

Smith, *William Parr*, *John Jenkins*, *Richard Kirby*, *Thomas Dobbins*, *S. Manſell*, *Jane Hicks*, *John Newcomb*, *William Perkins*, *William Webb*, *John Gunn*, *Joſeph Walker*, *Joſeph Wall*, *N. Wilkinſon*, *F. Harvey*, *R. Paton*, *E. Hall*, *Ann Heminge*, *Eliz. Bayleys*, *T. Dunton*, *T. Beale*, *R. Engliſh*, *William Pecks*, *T. Jenkins*, *J. Chandler*, *William Harris*, *William White*, *Richard Whiller*, *J. Hopkins*, *Joane Burton*, *Mary Burton*, *Richard Ruſſell*, *Richard Broadwell*, *D. Wilkinſon*, *T. Horton*, *John Johnſon*, *William Collins*, *William Harvey*, *John Bowter*, *T. Brotherton*, *Martin Willetts*, and *Iſabel Parker*. On the thirteenth of the ſame month of January, "the meeting at *Worceſter*, conſiſting of only women (nearly all the men being then in priſon), the officers came and took them away, and put them in a place of confinement called Under Riders, where they were kept ſeveral hours; nevertheleſs on the 20th they met again, and were committed to the ſame place, and afterwards to Bridewell;* two of them having been firſt ſet in the ſtocks

* There was a priſon in the old Guildhall, and the gaoler's reſidence in the ſame building, which he occupied as a public houſe, ſelling drink at exorbitant rates to the priſoners, and when their purſes were not equal to the demand they were treated with brutal ſeverity. It was ordered by the Corporation "that the priſon next adjoining the Tolſey (Guildhall) ſhould be for all parties, citizens or others, arreſted by proceſs of the Court of Record of this city (debtors, &c.), and the felons to be committed to the priſon of the Foregate" (then in Gaol Lane, now St. *Nicholas* Street).

for five hours. The names of theſe two were *Suſan Pearſon* and *Elizabeth Deane*, and of the others, *Elizabeth Careless*, *Ann Skiller*, *Ann Walker*, *Alice Deane*, *Ellen Price* (aged sixty-three), and *Elizabeth Read.*" At the aſſizes in the following March thoſe who were impriſoned in our county gaol were ſet at liberty, except *William Smith* and two women. Mr. *Townſend*, in his MS., ſays---"I and Mr. *G. Symonds*, as Juſtices, releaſed out of the Caſtle jail of *Worceſter* this day (28th), forty-four Quakers and fourteen Anabaptiſts, upon their promiſing to appear at the next jail delivery, and in the mean time to keep the peace," &c. On the 4th day of July (1661), *Edward Walker*, who had been impriſoned ſeveral weeks for refuſing the oaths, was again ſent for by the mayor, and for the ſame cauſe committed to priſon.

Venner's inſurrection (Fifth Monarchy men) about this time had given occaſion for an order in council forbidding all ſectaries to meet in large numbers or at unuſual times, though the Quakers, Independents, and Baptiſts, had publiſhed their deteſtation of that inſurrection and their prayer for toleration.

On the 12th of January, 1661-2 (ſays *Beſſe*), "the Friends being peaceably met at the houſe of *Robert Smith*, in *Worceſter*, a marſhal with a file of muſketeers (being of thoſe called 'the

clergy band') came and in a hoſtile manner forced all the men there met, being eighteen, to go with them. They ſhowed no order or warrant, but guarded them through ſeveral ſtreets to their captain's houſe, who ordered the ſoldiers to carry them to the marſhal's. They were kept about three days and three nights, it being the time of a general ſeſſion, at which, though they were never called to appear or anſwer for themſelves, an indictment was found againſt them upon the evidence of but one man, and he an infamous perſon who had been formerly arraigned for murder and was afterwards diſtracted. From the marſhal's they were removed to the town gaol, and there remained; their names were--- *John Wright*, *Edward Lewis*, *F. Fincher*, *John Price*, ſen., *Robert Tomkins*, *J. Clarke*, *Rd. Lewis*, *Robert Smith*, *John Price* minor, *Abm. Roberts*, *Ed. Stanton*, *Gervas Pearſon*, *Rd. Fidoe*, *John Price* minimus, *Francis Harvey*, *George Knight*, *Nicholas Blackmore*, and *John Townſend*. In the ſame month, "*Daniel Baker*, *Philip Bearcroft*, and *Thos. Hacket*, were taken from a meeting and impriſoned; and after eight weeks the ſaid *Baker* was again committed on 35th *Elizabeth*, which obliges nonconformiſts to abjure the realm on pain of being proceeded againſt as felons." In the May following "*Wm. Parr* was ſent to *Worceſter* gaol for refuſing to pay tithes; and in

July, *Thos. Wells* was ſent to gaol for refuſing to take the oath of allegiance, and *Rd. Payton* for ſuffering a meeting at his houſe. The latter had afterwards the oath tendered to him, and upon his refuſal to take it was run to a premunire, and had his eſtate confiſcated." At the aſſizes in the ſame month, "*Robert Smith* was indicted for refuſing to take the oath; he had been taken with many others by military force, and on being aſked why he appeared before the Court with his hat on, ſaid it was his own and he came fairly by it, and that it was no more contempt of Court than to wear a coat or cloak." He was fined 5*l.*, and thereupon a long dialogue enſued between him and the judge, but the Quaker declined on ſcriptural grounds to take the oath; he was brought up on ſeveral occaſions, and then ordered to have his eſtate confiſcated and be impriſoned during the King's pleaſure---a period which laſted nearly ten years!

In *Wm. Sewel's Hiſtory of the Quakers* is the following account of this trial:

"Now I could enter upon a large relation of the trial of many priſoners at *Worceſter* before the judges *Hide* and *Terril;* but ſince that trial was much after the ſame manner as that of *John Crook*, herebefore mentioned at large, I'll but curſorily make ſome mention of it. When the priſoners, being brought to the bar, aſked why

they had been kept ſo long in priſon, they were anſwered with the queſtion, whether they would take the oath of allegiance, and endeavours were uſed to draw ſome to betray themſelves, by aſking them where they had been on ſuch a day; for if they had ſaid 'at meeting,' then it would have appeared from their own mouth that they had acted contrary to the law. But they anſwered verily, that they were not bound to accuſe themſelves. Others by evidence were charged with having been at the meeting; and when they ſaid that their meetings were not always for public worſhip, but that they had alſo meetings to take care of widows, fatherleſs, and others that were indigent; yet it was ſaid to the jury that though there was no evidence that there had been any preaching in the meeting, yet if they did but believe the priſoners had kept a meeting for religious worſhip it was ſufficient for them to approve the indictment. And yet ſuch proceeding in other caſes would have been thought unwarrantable. One *Edward Bourne*, being impriſoned ---(See another account further on.) * * * Now ſince thoſe that were fined thus did not uſe to pay the fines, judging that the thing which they were fined for was an indiſpenſable duty they owed to *God*, and therefore they could not pay any ſuch fine with a good conſcience, the conſequence therefore generally was impriſonment and diſtraining of their goods, whereby ſome loſt twice and it may be thrice as much as the fine amounted to. Some of the priſoners made it appear that they had been ſomewhere elſe the night of the meeting at the houſe of one *Robert Smith*, at ſuch time as the evidence de-

clared by oath; yet becauſe they gave no ſatisfactory anſwer to the queſtion whether they had not been there on that day they were deemed guilty; the ſaid *R. Smith* was premunired, for the oath of allegiance being tendered to him, and he menaced by the judge with a premunire, he aſked for whom that law (for taking the ſaid oath) was made, whether not for Papiſts. And on ſuſpicion that ſome of that perſuaſion ſat on the bench, he aſked alſo whether they, for the ſatisfaction of the people there preſent, ought not alſo to take the oath. But the judge waived this, telling him he muſt take the oath, or elſe ſentence ſhould be pronounced againſt him. *Smith* aſked them whether the example of *Chriſt* ſhould decide the queſtion; but the judge ſaid I am not come here to diſpute with you concerning the doctrine of *Chriſt*, but to inform you concerning the doctrine of the law. Then *Smith* was led away; and afterwards, when an indictment for his refuſing the oath was drawn up, he was brought into court again, and aſked whether he would anſwer to the indictment or no; and the reaſons he gave not being accepted, the judge ſaid, before *Smith* had done ſpeaking, 'This is your ſentence, and the judgment of the Court: You ſhall be ſhut out of the King's protection, and forfeit your perſonal eſtate to the King for ever, and your real eſtate during life.' To this *Robert Smith* ſaid, with a compoſed mind, 'The *Lord* hath given, and if He ſuffers it to be taken away His will be done. Thus *Smith* ſuffered, with many more of his friends there and elſewhere; all which I believe my life-time would not be ſufficient to deſcribe circumſtantially."

Three days after *Smith* was committed, the ſheriff ſeized his perſonal eſtate for the King, and took an inventory even to the minuteſt thing, ſuch as a ladle, fleſhfork, &c., and a baſket which coſt but three farthings. *Smith* ſent a letter to Judge *Hyde* after this ſentence had been paſſed (it being not an unuſual thing in thoſe days for priſoners to memorialiſe judges and juries before as well as after their trial), in which, after ſome general admonitions on the ſhortneſs of life and the accountability of man, he proceeds---

"And as for thy dealing with me and my poor family, and alſo with friends at the laſt aſſizes, I deſire it may be blotted out if the *Lord* ſee it meet, and not laid to thy charge; and as for the ſheriffe, with others, they have uſed more faithfulneſs, I am perſuaded, in performing thy ſentence againſt us than they would have uſed in a better work, and they have not been negligent concerning me, but exactly ſeized upon all in my houſe; they did not ſo much as let the ſkimmer eſcape their remembrance, neither were they forgetful of the ladle, which with the reſt is priced and ſold, and moneys received for it by him that ſeized. This is the pity and kindneſs I have met with even from my own neighbours and native countrymen, who take no care for my diſtreſſed family, who are ten in number, with whom I have not been above theſe ſix months, and both I and them might have periſhed had not the love of *God* exceeded the cruelty of man. Much might be

declared in this wiſe, but I forbeare, knowing that crueltie fitts not man for the *Lord*, but rather helps backward than forward to the reſt that remains for evermore; and if the ſenſe of theſe things hath at all pierced thy underſtanding, thou maiſt do well to moderate ye ſtrictneſs of my impriſonment, that I may have a little liberty to help my helpleſs family. It would not, I believe, be diſpleaſing to the *Lord* if I was reſtored both to my liberty and alſo to that which was taken from me; neither would it diſhonour the King, ſo I deſire thee to ponder the weight of theſe things in thy mind, and to anſwer me according as the good *Spirit* of the *Lord* doth either witneſs for me or againſt me; and remain thy friend, though thou haſt been my great enemy, and am a lover of liberty in things pertaining to conſcience and honeſty, *Robert Smith*."

A copy of the above letter is preſerved in the earlieſt minute book of the *Worceſter* Friends.

At the ſame aſſizes whereat *Robert Smith* was ſo grievouſly treated, *Edward Bourne*---a leading man among the Quakers, who were uſed frequently to aſſemble at his houſe---and *George Knight* were alſo tried, the one for maintaining that all oaths were unlawful, and the other for meeting with others on the 11th of June at the houſe of the above-mentioned *Robert Smith*. There were great diſcrepancies and informalities in the proceedings againſt them, and *Bourne* took the opportunity of aſking the judge a puzzling

queſtion---"Suppoſe that *Chriſt* and His apoſtles were here at this time, and they ſhould meet together, would not this law lay hold on them?" Judge: "Yes, that it would;" but then recollecting himſelf, he ſaid, "I will not anſwer your queſtion; you are no apoſtles." *Bourne:* "We are Chriſtian followers of *Chriſt*, as they were." Being found guilty, they were fined 5*l.* each, or three months' hard labour. In like manner were puniſhed, *John Pike*, *John Townſend*, *Suſanna Pearſon*, *R. Tomkins*, *T. Jukes*, *J. Clarke*, *R. Fidoe*, *W. Pitt*, *Ed. Stanton*, *Ab. Roberts*, *Ab. Arms*, *Gervas Pearſon*, *F. Harvey*, *F. Fincher*, *Jeffery Raſmus*, *T. Ball*, and *J. Waite*. Many of theſe priſoners, beſides *Smith*, memorialiſed the judges (*Hyde* and *Tyrrell*), appealing to their conſciences to do what was right in the ſight of the *Lord*, and repreſenting how they had been oppreſſed in the time of *Cromwell* and his ſon *Richard*. In the enſuing month of Auguſt, at the ſeſſions, *H. Gibbs*, *E. Hall*, *G. Fort*, *J. Newcomb*, *T. Denton*, *S. Bailey*, *J. Johnſon*, *W. Collins*, and *E. Gibbs*, were ſentenced to pay 5*l.* each, or three months' impriſonment. On the laſt day of the ſame month, Major *Wilde* (who emulated the magiſtrates of *Eveſham* in his ferocity againſt the poor Quakers), "with a party of ſoldiers, came to *Eveſham*, and ſent ſome of his ſoldiers to fetch

ſeveral of the inhabitants of that town, and alſo *Robert Baylis*, *W. Webb*, and *R. Walker*, of *Broadway*, being brought before him, he took their words for their appearance at *Worceſter* next day, except *R. Walker*, whom they uſed very inhumanly, driving him (though a poor ſick man, and above ſixty years of age) before their horſes on foot, and when he was not able to keep pace with them a ſoldier took him and dragged him along by force. The major himſelf beat him down with his horſe and threatened to piſtol him. At length they ſet him on horſeback, whipping the horſe both up-hill and down-hill, to the great pain of the infirm man, who, when he entreated them to be more merciful to his weak body, met with nothing from them except returns of ſcoffs and deriſion. He was thus brought by them to *Worceſter* jail, but the hardſhips he had met with by the way had ſo weakened his body---before afflicted with a long-continued ptiſick---that he died in a ſhort time after his commitment. He was a man of meek, innocent, and Chriſtian ſpirit, inoffenſive in life and converſation, and generally well beloved by thoſe that knew him."

This year (1662) witneſſed the paſſing of the Act of Uniformity, when the Puritan clergy were ejected from their livings and became the founders of numerous ſectarian congregations,

while others were gladly received into ſocieties already exiſting, as of Quakers, Independents, and Baptiſts. On the 1ſt of January, 1662-3, *H. Gibbs*, *W. Collins*, *S. Pitway*, and *Jos. Walker*, were taken from their own houſes and committed to priſon, and at the next ſeſſions the two firſt were recommitted for ſix months, though no breach of any law was proved againſt them; and on the 26th of the ſame month *E. Edwards* was taken at a meeting and ſent to priſon.

In the *Worceſter* county rolls for 1662 is "A calendar of the priſoners called Quakers: *Rd. Payton*, convicted *de premunire; Edward Hall*, convicted for words ſpoken in open court, fined 5*l.*, and committed till payed; *Henry Gibbs*, *Wm. Collins*, *Wm. Webb*, *Robert Baylis*, *Rd. Walker* alias *Weaver*, *Jos. Walker*, *Rd. Bennet*, *Wm. Eades*, *Stephen Pitway*, committed the 2nd of January, 1662, for having lately aſſembled themſelves under the pretence of joyning in a religious worſhip, to the great endangering of the publique peace and ſafetye, and to the terrour of the people in ſeverall places of this county."

On the 10th of May, 1663, thirty men and women were taken out of a meeting at *Worceſter*, and committed to priſon next day; the women and ſome of the men were ſet at liberty,

but ten of them continued in priſon, viz., *Ab. Roberts*, *R. Fidoe*, *J. Clark*, *G. Pearſon*, *J. Raſmus*, *T. Ball*, *E. Lewis*, *J. Price*, *N. Blackmore*, and *J. Wright*. About the ſame time, *Ezekiel Partridge* was a priſoner in *Worceſter* gaol on a writ *de excom. cap.*, by the procurement of one *Truſtram*, prieſt of *Belbroughton*. On the 8th of November, *N. Blackmore*, with *Wm. Pitt* and *J. Jenkins*, was again committed to priſon; and in the following January, "*J. Waite*, *A. Roberts*, *E. Stanton*, *Dudley Linton*, *E. Lewis*, and another, were required by the Mayor of *Worceſter* and Major *Wilde* to pay four ſhillings each for a month's abſence from church, though ſeveral of them had been impriſoned three-quarters of a year before, and had not been diſcharged from thence three weeks. Upon this refuſal to pay, the magiſtrates cauſed their wearing clothes to be taken off their backs in their preſence by way of diſtreſs, and accordingly were taken from *J. Waite* two coats and his hat; from *Roberts*, a great coat worth thirty ſhillings; from *Stanton*, a riding coat; from *Linton*, a great coat and hat; from *Lewis*, a great coat; and from the others, a coat and hat. *John Jenkins*, being abſent from public worſhip, was excommunicated and committed to *Worceſter* gaol by a writ *de ex. cap.*, where he continued ſeveral years. In this year alſo, *N. Blackmore*,

W. Pitt, *R. Bennett*, and *T. Jenkins*, were fined and committed to priſon for not taking off their hats in court."

In 1664, March 11th, "*E. Bourne* and two friends who were intending to lodge at his houſe, namely, *Jas. Harriſon* and *J. Cartwright*, were taken by ſoldiers, one of whom being aſked for their orders, held up his piſtol, ſaying that was his order. They carried them before Major *Wilde*, who committed them to *Worceſter* gaol; they alſo ſeized and took away *James Harriſon's* horſe from an inn where they had left it." And on June 11th "*J. Jenkins*, of *Clifton*, eighty years of age, was committed to *Worceſter* gaol, having been excommunicated in conſequence of a proſecution in the Eccleſiaſtical Court at the ſuit of *John Parker*, the prieſt, for tithes."

The *Worceſter* corporation records for the year 1665 contain the following entries: "Paid two ſoldiers for watching the Quackers, 1*s*.6*d*.;" and "Paid *James Hill* for a bill againſt the Quackers, and other expenſes by him laid out the laſt aſſizes, 8*s*.6*d*."

George Fox writes in 1666---

"Coming into *Worceſterſhire*, after many meetings among friends in that county, we had a general men's meeting at *Henry Gibs's* at *Paſhur (Perſhore)*, where alſo the monthly meetings were ſettled in the Goſpel order. The ſeſſions

being held that day in the town, ſome friends were concerned leſt they ſhould ſend officers to break up our meeting, but the power of the *Lord* reſtrained them ſo that it was quiet; through which power we had dominion. I had ſeveral meetings amongſt friends in that county till I came to *Worceſter*, and it being fair time, we had a precious meeting. There was there in *Worceſter* one Major *Wild*, a perſecuting man, and after I was gone ſome of his ſoldiers enquired after me; but having left the friends there ſettled in good order, we paſſed to *Droitwich* and thence to *Shrewſbury*."

In the ſame year (1666) the following Quakers were "taken at a conventicle and committed by *Thos. Wilde*, Esq.:" *Wm. Pitt*, *Rd. Fydo*, *Abra. Roberts*, *Rich. Lewis*, *Ed. Lewis*, *Rd. Stanton*, *John Wright*, *Alex. Berdſlye*, *Thos. Fitrale*, and *John Hoſkins*. Next year (as I find from the county ſeſſions rolls) the gaoler's liſt of priſoners then in gaol included the following---

"*Thomas Payton*, late of *Dudley*, taylor, a p'feſſed Quaker, taken at a conventicle of Quakers in the ſaid town of *Dudley*, a place much infeſted with Quakers and diſorderlie p'ſons, and comitted to ye gaole 10th July, xiiii *Caroli*, and being a ſtubborn and incorigible p'ſon, was at ye next ſeſſions following tendred the oathe of allegiance, which he refuſed to take, was indicted, and convicted of premunire. *Thomas Feckenham*, another leader of the ſame ſect,

was likewiſe apprehended about three years ſince, and tendred ye oathe of allegiance, and beinge ſtill obſtinate and p'verſe, hath been continued a priſoner, but with ſome liberty now and then extended towards him, wh. kindneſs hath not as yet wrought any conformitie or ſubmiſſion in him. *John Jenkins* and *William Pardoe*, Quakers, excommunicated in ye conſiſtory of *Hereford*, and taken by a writ *de excom. capiend.* about a year ſince. *John Roberts*, of *Droitwich*, p'feſſed Quaker, for uſing his trade and calling on ye Sunday or *Lord's* Day, was likewiſe preſented and excommunicated a year ago. *John Tombs*, of *Droitwich*, for the like offence, and for refuſing to permit the ſacred ordinance of baptiſm to be adminiſtered to his children, likewiſe excommunicated, and taken up by the like writ. *Job Allibone* and *Wm. Hodges*, for the ſame offence and refuſing to come to church. All wh. perſons ſoe committed are, by the overmuch indulgence of the late ſheriff, under-ſheriff, and gaoler, permitted to goe at liberty about their occaſſions, wh. we conſider doth encourage them to perſiſt in their contemptuous and incorrigible behaviour; and they are not to be found in priſon, unleſs for aboute an houre or a night once in ſix or eight weeks' time."

It ſeems this report of the ſtate of Quakeriſm was occaſioned by a requeſt from the Government that the magiſtrates ſhould inquire into the ſubject, and furniſh the names of the Quakers then in priſon, and whether they were ringleaders

or had been ſeduced into the commiſſion of offence by others. The *William Pardoe* mentioned above was probably the individual who was ſaid to have been the paſtor of the Baptiſt congregation in this city.---(See page 158.) *Thomas Feckenham* alſo is named as the founder of the *Worceſter* Baptiſts (see page 156), ſo that conſiderable confuſion prevails in the records as to the claſſification of diſſenters.

In the year 1670, May 10th, *Beſſe* obſerves---"A new act coming into force againſt religious meetings under the name of conventicles, the magiſtrates of *Worceſter* and others in the county were not wanting to put both it and other acts againſt Quakers into execution." On the 20th of June a warrant was iſſued by *Richard Brinley*, *Rob. Sellers*, *Ed. Soley*, and *J. Higgins*, magiſtrates, to the gaoler of the county of the city, thus:

"Whereas *R. Fidoe*, *J. Alford*, *J. Hunt*, and *R. Stevens* were, on the 19th inſt., in a riotous and tumultuous manner, with many other perſons, met together in Cooking Street, contrary to the laws of this land, and refuſing to diſperſe upon proclamation, they were apprehended and committed," &c.

This meeting in the ſtreet was not of the Quakers' own choice, but their uſual meeting place being locked up by the mayor's order, they

met before the door, on their own hired ground, and when they were kept from that ground by force they met as near it in the ſtreet as they could. *Ed. Bourne*, *H. Smart*, and *E. Reynolds* were alſo committed in a ſimilar manner for refuſing to give ſureties for their appearance at ſeſſions. On 4th July, four others were committed---*W. Pardoe*, *W. Roberts*, *E. Lewis*, and *A. Beardſley*---for "meeting to hold a conventicle, and refuſing to give good ſureties for their good abearing." Mr. *J. Bearcroft* was then mayor, and *E. Soley*, *J. Higgins*, *R. Brinley*, and *F. Frankes*, magiſtrates. Some months before this, *Ed. Bourne* had fixed a paper to the door of the ſteeple-houſe at *Worceſter* (probably the Cathedral), denouncing thoſe who loved the chief places in the aſſemblies and ſalutations in the markets, as "Antichriſt's miniſters and falſe prophets, who ſought their gain from every quarter." *Bourne* was impriſoned three days for telling this piece of his mind. This leading Quaker (*Ed. Bourne*, the phyſician) was evidently a thorn in the ſide of the eccleſiaſtics. He was the author of *An Anſwer to Dr. Good (ſo called) his Dialogue againſt thoſe called Quakers, wherein he hath forged the Quaker and confuted himſelf; Worceſter, 21ſt of the 4th month*, 1675.

It will be ſeen from the above memoranda that the firſt regular meetings of the Quakers were

held in a houſe hired for the purpoſe in Cooken or Cucken Street (now abſurdly metamorphoſed into Copenhagen Street); though it has already been ſhown that the early meetings of the ſect were held at the private houſes of their leading members, *E. Bourne*, *Robert Smith*, and others.

Many impriſonments and diſtreſſes were inflicted on this ſuffering ſect in the year 1670-1. *John Payton* is ſaid, by *Beſſe*, to have been "fined ten ſhillings for his wife being at a meeting at *Dudley*, though ſhe was not there; but ſuch miſtakes were uſual with the informers, who often ſwore at random or by gueſs. The officers came to *Payton's* houſe by night, when all his family were in bed; they ſent a perſon to knock at the door, under pretence of buying ſomething; when the man himſelf came down to let in his ſuppoſed cuſtomer, the officers alſo ruſhed in and were about to make diſtreſs; but his wife calling ſome neighbours to witneſs what they did, and aſking whether they came like thieves in the night, they forbore, and came again next day, when they took away the kettle and other goods, to the value of 32*l.*, which goods they carried into the pariſh church, where they lay till they ſold them." In the ſame year, Sir *John Pakington*, of *Weſtwood*, and *Samuel Sandys*, of *Omberſley*, granted warrants againſt *F. Fincher*, *G. Maris*, *W. Sale*, and *John Tombs*. *Fincher* was taken on

his knees at prayer, and having ſubſequently heard that he was fined 20*l.*, he went to Juſtice *Pakington* (who, with *Sandys*, was on the bowling-green---probably the ancient one ſtill at *Hadley*) to expoſtulate with him, aſking him whether he thought prayer to *God* was a breach of the law. Sir *John*, in reply, ſaid that he might pray at home, and that he ſtood convicted on the oath of the informers. *Fincher* then, with Chriſtian boldneſs, exhorted him to juſtice and equity, but *Sandys* threatened him that if he did not hold his tongue he would ſend him where he would be loth to go. A ſhort time afterwards the officers brought three carts to *Fincher's* houſe and carried away the beſt of his goods, took poſſeſſion of the reſt, and ſold all; and within a few weeks after, *Fincher* was taken from his family and committed to *Worceſter* gaol by a writ *de excom. cap.*, where he lay ſeveral months; and *G. Maris*, at whoſe houſe the meeting was held, was impriſoned above eight months.

In the year 1672, *John Stanley* was committed to *Worceſter* priſon by Exchequer proceſs for tithes; February 16th, *Ann Heming* died in the ſame gaol, where ſhe had been confined for above four years for tithes; and in the ſame year, *R. Payton* and *R. Smith*---whoſe names are now familiar to my readers---were diſcharged by the King's letters patent, the former from about

ten years' confinement, under ſentence of præmunire, in the *Worceſter* county gaol, and the latter from an impriſonment of equal length in the city priſon.

The year 1673 is memorable for the impriſonment of *George Fox* at *Worceſter* and for the commencement of the Quakers' regular records in this city, which records are ſtill in exiſtence; but before analyſing theſe books let us turn our attention to poor *Fox's* account of his capture and impriſonment. Travelling through *Worceſterſhire* towards the north, he went to *John Halford's*, at *Armſcot*, in *Tredington* pariſh, "where we had a very large and precious meeting in his barn. After the meeting, friends being moſt of them gone, as I was ſitting in the parlour, diſcourſing with ſome friends, *Henry Parker*, a juſtice, came to the houſe, and with him *Rowland Hains*, prieſt of *Hunniton*. This juſtice came to know of the meeting by means of a woman friend, who, being nurſe to a child of his, aſked leave of her miſtress to go to the meeting to ſee me." *Parker* then cauſed *Fox* and his ſon-in-law, *Thomas Lower*, to be apprehended, and ſent them both to *Worceſter* gaol, by a *mittimus* ſetting forth that there had been a meeting to the number of 200, or thereabouts, at *Armſcot*, and that *Fox* and *Lower* were preſent, and giving no ſatisfactory account of their ſettle-

ment or place of habitation, and refuſing to give ſureties to appear at next ſeſſions, the conſtables of *Tredington* were authoriſed to take them to the county gaol of *Worceſter*. *Fox* got ſome friends to accompany his wife and her daughter into the north while he and his ſon-in-law were led by the officers to *Worceſter*. In a ſubſequent letter to his wife he declared that he had "had a ſight of being taken priſoner the night before" ---that is, he had received a ſupernatural forewarning of what was to happen. When they had been ſome time in gaol they laid their caſe before Lord *Windſor*, then lord lieutenant of *Worceſterſhire*, and before the deputy lieutenants, ſhowing how inhumanly they had been dealt with; that *Lower* was going down with his mother-in-law (*Fox's* wife) and with his ſiſter, to fetch up his own wife and child out of the north into his own country; that *Fox* was bringing his wife on her journey towards the north, having been at *London* to viſit one of her daughters juſt lain in; and he had aſked the prieſt whether this was his goſpel and their way of "entertaining ſtrangers," and deſired the juſtice to conſider whether this was doing as he would be done by; but he replied, "he had ſaid it and would do it." No relief was obtained from Lord *Windſor*, although many of the *Worceſterſhire* juſtices diſliked *Parker's* proceedings; ſome friends how-

ever ſpoke to Lord *Windſor*, "and on the laſt day of the ſeſſions, 21ſt of 11th month, 1673, when we came into court they were ſtruck with paleneſs in their faces, and it was ſome time before anything was ſpoken, inſomuch that a butcher in the hall ſaid, 'What, are they afraid? Dare not the juſtices ſpeak to them?' At length, before they ſpoke to us, Juſtice *Parker* made a long ſpeech on the bench, much to the ſame effect as was contained in the *mittimus*, often mentioning the common laws, but not inſtancing any we had broken, adding that he thought it a milder courſe to ſend us two to gaol than to put his neighbours to the loſs of 200*l.*, which they muſt have ſuffered if he had put the law in execution againſt conventicles. But in this he was very deceitful or very ignorant, for there being no meeting when he came, nor any to inform, he had no evidence to convict us or his neighbours by. When *Parker* had ended his ſpeech, the juſtices began with *Thomas Lower*, whom they examined of the cauſe of his coming into the country, of which he gave them a full and plain account;" then they turned to *Fox* for his account; after which the chairman, an old Preſbyterian, ſaid, "Your relation or account is very innocent." Then he and *Parker* whiſpered together, and the chairman requeſted *Fox* to take the oaths of allegiance and ſupremacy,

and they tendered him the book, but he declined, ſaying, "The book ſaith, Swear not at all;" and the magiſtrates told the gaoler to take him away. *Lower* ſtayed behind to reaſon with them, but Mr. *Simpſon* threatened to impriſon him alſo. Mr. *Simpſon* aſked *Lower* if there was not cauſe to ſend *Fox* to priſon, when the parſon of the pariſh had complained that he had loſt the greateſt part of his pariſhioners. *Lower* replied, "I have heard that the prieſt of that pariſh comes ſo ſeldom to viſit his flock---but once or twice a year to gather tithes---that it was but charity in *George Fox* to viſit ſuch a forlorn and forſaken flock." Upon this the juſtices laughed, and chaffed Dr. *Crowder*, the prieſt alluded to, who was ſitting there unknown to *Lower;* and he threatened to ſue *Lower* in the Biſhop's Court, but *Lower* ſent him word to begin it when he would, for the ſuit would be anſwered, and the whole pariſh brought in evidence againſt him. This cooled the doctor, and nothing further was done in it. *Crowder* was a prebendary of *Worceſter*, and afterwards viſited *Fox* in priſon, entering into arguments with him on oaths, but got the worſt of the diſcuſſion. Soon after the ſeſſions, the term coming on, an habeas corpus was ſent to *Worceſter* for the ſheriff to bring up *Fox* to the King's Bench bar, whereupon the under-ſheriff

having made *Lower* his deputy to convey *Fox* to *London* (a pretty good proof of the confidence repoſed in the honour of Quakers), they ſet out on the 29th of the eleventh month, 1673, the ways being very deep and the waters out. Proceedings went on, and then Juſtice *Parker* or ſome other of *Fox's* adverſaries moved the court that he ſhould be ſent back to *Worceſter*, and the judge gave judgment that he ſhould be returned to *Worceſter* ſeſſions. *Parker* had ſpread a rumour that *Fox* was aſſociated with many ſubſtantial men in various parts of the country, and had a plot in hand, "inſomuch (ſays the accuſed) that if I had not been brought up to *London* when I was, I had been ſtopped at *Worceſter*, and *Thomas Lower* had been recommitted with me. But although theſe lies were eaſily diſproved, and laid open to *Parker's* ſhame, yet would not the judges alter their laſt ſentence, but remanded me to *Worceſter* jail;" only this favour was granted---that he might go down at his own leiſure, ſo that he appeared at the aſſize. He arrived at *Worceſter* on the laſt day of the firſt month, 1674, being the day before the judges came; and "on the ſecond day of the ſecond month I was brought from the jail to an inn near the hall, that I might be in readineſs if I ſhould be called; but not being called that day, the gaoler came at night

and told me I might go home---meaning to the jail. *Gerard Roberts*, of *London*, being with me, he and I walked down together to the jail without any keeper. Next day, being brought up again, they ſet a little boy, about eleven years old, to be my keeper. I came to underſtand Juſtice *Parker* and the clerk of the peace had given order that I ſhould not be put in the calendar, that I might not be brought before the judge;" but ſome one procured the judge's ſon to move that *Fox* ſhould be called, and then he found the judge was *Turner*, an old adverſary. The judge tendered the oath, which being refuſed, *Fox* was again referred to the ſeſſions, bidding the juſtices to make an end of it there, and not to trouble the aſſizes again. "So (ſays he) I was continued priſoner chiefly through the means of Juſtice *Parker*, for other juſtices were very loving, and promiſed that I ſhould have the liberty of the town and to lodge at a friend's houſe till the ſeſſions, which accordingly I did, and the people were very civil and reſpectful to me. Between this time and the ſeſſions I had ſome ſervice for the *Lord* with ſeveral that came to viſit me. At one time three nonconformiſt prieſts and two lawyers diſcourſed with me, and one of the prieſts undertook to prove that the Scriptures are the only rule of life, but I defeated him by contending that the grace of *God* was given to every

man to be a ſufficient rule. Then a common-prayer prieſt came to me and ſome people with him, and had a controverſy with me on perfectibility, contending that if a man ſaid he had no ſin he deceived himſelf. I replied that all *God's* works were perfect, or rather there is perfection in *Chriſt* above *Adam*," and he relates that the prieſt's mouth was thereupon ſtopped. At the next ſeſſions, being the 29th of the ſecond month, "I was called before the juſtices; the chairman's name *Street*, a judge on the *Welch* circuit, and he miſrepreſented me and my cauſe to the country, telling them that my meeting at *Tredington* was to terrify the King's subjects. This I denied, and ſtated the caſe, but the judge told me I was canting. The judge having told the jury how to act, I was led out of the Court, and the people were generally tender as if they had been in a meeting. Soon after I was brought in again, and the jury found a bill againſt me, which I traverſed. Then I was aſked to put in bail, and the jailor's ſon offered to be bound for me, but I ſtopped him, and warned friends not to meddle, for I told them there was a ſnare in it; yet I told the juſtices I would promiſe to appear if the *Lord* gave me health and ſtrength. Some of the juſtices were loving, and would have ſtopped the reſt from indicting me or putting the oath to me, but Juſtice *Street* ſaid he muſt go

according to law. So I was ſent to priſon again. Yet within two hours after, through the moderation of ſome of the juſtices, I had liberty given me till next quarter ſeſſions. Theſe moderate juſtices, as it was ſaid, deſired Juſtice *Parker* to write to the King for my liberty, or for a *noli proſequi*, becauſe they were ſatisfied I was not ſuch a dangerous perſon as I had been repreſented. This, it was ſaid, he promiſed to do, but did it not." *Fox* then went to *London*, but returned to *Worceſter* before the following ſeſſions, whereat Juſtice *Street* was again chairman; but ſome ſcruple ariſing among the jury concerning the indictment, the chairman wiſhed to tender the oath again to *Fox;* at length "he browbeat the jury and made them go out and bring in a verdict of guilty, although there were many errors in the indictment. One of the jury would have taken me by the hand, but I reminded him of the treachery of *Judas*, and bid him and them repent." A ſentence of premunire was paſſed, with loſs of goods and impriſonment for life. Mr. *Twittey* was then clerk of the peace. *John Aſhley*, a lawyer, was very friendly to *Fox* on the trial, ſpeaking on his behalf and pleading errors in the indictment, but chairman *Street* overruled all; however (adds *Fox*) "the *Lord* pleaded my cauſe, and met with both him and Juſtice *Simpſon*, who firſt enſnared

me with the oath at the firſt ſeſſions, for *Simpſon's* ſon was arraigned not long after at the ſame bar for murder; and *Street*, who, as he came down from *London*, after the judges had returned me back from the King's Bench to *Worceſter*, ſaid, 'Now I was returned to them I ſhould lie in priſon and rot,' had his daughter (whom he ſo doted on that ſhe was called his idol) brought dead from *London* in an hearſe to the ſame inn where he ſpoke theſe words, and brought to *Worceſter* to be buried within a few days after. People took notice of the hand of *God*, how ſudden it was upon him; but it rather hardened than tendered him, as his carriage afterwards ſhowed. After I was returned to priſon, ſeveral came to ſee me, and amongſt others the Earl of *Saliſbury's* ſon, who was very loving, and troubled that they had dealt ſo wickedly by me." The aſſizes coming on in the ſixth month, a ſtatement of *Fox's* caſe was drawn up in writing, his wife and *Lower* delivering it to Judge *Wild;* and *Fox* himſelf ſent a long epiſtle to the King. About this time he was ſeized with a long fit of illneſs, ſo that doubts were entertained of his recovery; but one night, in bed, he aſſures us, the *Lord* ſaid to him that He had a great deal more work for him to do before He took him to Himſelf.

Fox's wife now came to viſit him in *Worceſter* priſon, and her report of him was as follows:

"After ſome time he fell ſick in a long, lingering ſickneſs, and many times was very ill; ſo they wrote to me from *London* that, if I would ſee him alive, I might go to him, which accordingly I did; and after I had tarried ſeventeen weeks with him at *Worceſter*, and no diſcharge like to be obtained for him, I went up to *London*, and wrote to the King an account of his long impriſonment, and that he was taken on his travel homewards, and that he was ſick and weak and not like to live if they kept him long there; and I went with it to Whitehall myſelf, and I met with the King and gave him the paper, and he ſaid I muſt go to the Chancellor, he could do nothing in it. Then I wrote alſo to the Lord Chancellor, and went to his houſe, and gave him my paper, and ſpoke to him that the King had left it wholly to him, and if he did not take pity and releaſe him out of that priſon, I feared he would end his days there. And the Lord Chancellor *Finch* was a very tender man, and ſpoke to the judge, who gave out an habeas corpus preſently; and when we got it we ſent it down to *Worceſter*. They would not part with him at firſt, but ſaid he was premunired, and was not to go out in that manner. And then we were forced to go to Judge *North* and to the Attorney-General, and we got another order and ſent down from them, and with much ado and great labour and induſtry of *William Mead* and other friends we got him up to *London*."

The King, it ſeems, was willing to releaſe *Fox* by ſpecial pardon, but the high-minded

ſufferer declined to accept of liberty on thoſe terms, deeming himſelf innocent of any offence. *Edward Pitway* at laſt got Juſtice *Parker* to order the gaoler "to ſhow him what lawful favour he could for the benefit of the air for his health." This was on the 8th of October, 1674. After this, *Fox's* wife obtained an interview with the King and the judges as mentioned above, and the priſoner was once more brought to King's Bench, to try the errors in his indictment. The under-ſheriff, clerk of the peace, and ſome others, went up to town with *Fox* in the ſtage coach from *Worceſter*. [This is the firſt mention of a ſtage coach in this city, and thoſe vehicles had not at that time aſſumed the name of mails, balloons, jupiters, flys, &c. The firſt mail coach from *Worceſter* to *London* was not eſtabliſhed till the 28th of Auguſt, 1785---ſtill in living memory.] The journey from *Worceſter* to *London* by ſtage then occupied four days, *Fox* and his companions ſetting out on the 4th day of the 12th month and arriving in *London* on the 8th. The clerk of the peace had been uniformly *Fox's* enemy, and a four days' cloſe companionſhip on theſe terms, in a lumbering vehicle, proceeding at a rate of leſs than three miles an hour, could have been by no means a pleaſant thing, juſt recovering, as he was, too, from a long attack of ſickneſs. Mr.

Twittey, it ſeems, ſtill bore enmity to the unoffending Quaker, and ſought to enſnare him in his talk, but *Fox* ſhunned him, and ſo remained on his guard. The reſult of this journey was that the judges unanimouſly thought there were ſo many errors in the indictment that it muſt be quaſhed, and accordingly *Fox* received his liberty.

During the time of his impriſonment in *Worceſter* gaol---a period of one year and nearly two months---he had written a great number of epiſtles to his followers in many parts of the kingdom, beſides books or treatiſes, entitled, *A Warning to the Engliſh*, *To the Jews concerning the Meſſiah*, *Againſt all Vain Diſputes*, *For Biſhops and Miniſters*, *to try them by the Scriptures*, &c.

It has been ſtated before that the year of *Fox's* impriſonment at *Worceſter* (1673) was the period of the commencement of the Quakers' records in this city. Theſe books, which I have diligently examined, are highly creditable to that body, as a proof of their buſineſs-like habits, order, and arrangement, as well as of the care with which they have been preſerved, there being only one minute book (extending from 1765 to 1776) miſſing from the year 1673 to the preſent time. Their firſt minute book commences thus:

"The monthly meeting book of the people of *God*, called Quakers, in the city of *Worceſter*.

"After we had had many monthly meetings at *Edwd. Bourne's* houſe in *Worceſter*, wee judged it neceſſary to notify or record ſome things agreed upon by us thereatt ſuch meetings, for the eaſier and more thoroughly doing that good work which the *Lord* have called us unto, in reſpect of diſcharging of our dutyes unto one another, that ſoe all who are accounted of us may be admoniſhed as in *God's* wiſdom there ſhal be ſeene cauſe, that they walk according to the truth."

The firſt entry in this book is headed---

"Att the monthly meeting at *Edwd. Bourne's* houſe in *Worceſter*, the 13th of the 8th month, 1673."

The minutes throughout this long ſeries of nearly two centuries relate to matters of diſcipline, the excommunication or diſowning of unruly members, ſuch as were inconſiſtent enough to be married by a church prieſt, or were guilty of habitual drunkenneſs, ſcandal, or other immorality, or incurred debts reckleſſly, or who launched into undue trading ſpeculations without chance of ſucceſs, or who followed the cuſtoms of the world in dreſs or other particulars; exhortations not to pay tithes or other prieſts' charges, accounts of the ſufferings of Quakers from time to time (which were tranſmitted to *London* to

be ſtored up for future hiſtory), entries of minutes and queries received for their guidance from the *London* yearly meeting, putting out apprentices and paying the paſſage of poor friends to *Pennſylvania* and other ſettlements, accounts of Quakers' marriages and the ſtrict precaution taken that both the candidates for matrimony ſhould be "clear of all others" before they were permitted to become man and wife, together with records of the appointment of members to inſpect the converſation of friends, peace-making interventions between members who quarrelled, and affectionate interviews in the hope of reclaiming thoſe who ſeemed by their conduct inclined to ſtray out of the fold---theſe heads form the ſtaple of the *Worceſter* Quakers' books.

Their firſt recorded marriage is in the year 1674, when *John Price* announced his intention of taking *Margaret Owen* to wife. This circumſtance was duly mentioned at the meeting by *Robert Smith*, who declared that *Thos. Vizard*, who had formerly laid ſome claim to the propoſed bride, had "acquitted her before ſome of the world"---that is, had abandoned his claim in the preſence of witneſſes not Quakers; and *John Price* was required to obtain a certificate of this fact from the ſaid witneſſes before whom "he had cleared her," that it might be recorded in the

monthly meeting book. Next month occurs the following entry:

"Agreed upon at ye monthly meeting yt *John Price* and *Margaret Owen* do lay their intention of marriage before ye women friends at their next monthly meeting, for ye ſatisfaction of all friends, and alſo an anſwer to friends' order and practice therein, that ye women friends do ſend with them one woman friend to certify us at our monthly meeting of their allowance thereof."

The two affianced at length ſafely paſſed through the ordeal of the women's inquiries---and ſtrict and ſcrutiniſing no doubt they were---the marriage was allowed, and the following is a liſt of the witneſſes who attended that ceremony:

Edw. Bourn	*Rich. Roberts*
Leonard Fell	*Sam. Pitt*
Rob. Smith	*Ann Evans*
Tho. Hacket	*Milliſent Hodgkins*
Rob. Toomer	*Ellenor Harvy*
Tho. Reeves	*Margery Walker*
Tho. Jukes	*Mary Pardoe*
Wm. Pitt	*Margaret Bourn*
John Knight	*Elenor Stanton*
Edw. Lewis	*Eliz. Wright*
Alex. Beardſley	*Suſanna Adams*

Some years later there is entered on the minutes

"A coppie of *Robt.* and *Suſan Knight's* (paper) condemning their running out and being married

by a prieſt: Dear friends, to you who are of the tender ſeed of *God* are theſe following lines written, to let you underſtand that whereas wee who have profeſſed the truth of *God*, and not only ſoe, but have often at times and ſeaſons been made p'takers thereof to the comfort of our ſoules, have for want of keeping thereunto, which would have p'ſerved us from the temptation of the evil one, been inſnared by him and fallen in it by being joined together in marriage by a national prieſt, and now by the mercy of *God*, who have let us ſee the evil of it, and led us to repentance therein, are truly ſorry that we have grieved His Spirit in ourſelves and in you who were burthen'd by it. And further, we doe acknowledge that we went contrarie to our underſtanding in ſoe doinge, and ſoe deny that ſpirit that led us to it and the way of accompliſhing it to be out of the truth, and hope for the future our lives and converſations may be ſuch that you may have unitie with us, who are, with our true love to you, your friends, *Robert Knight*, *Suſan Knight*."

This recantation was deemed ſufficient, and the two penitents were reinſtated as members. Further on, "*James Stafford* confeſſes (in his paper of condemnation) that he had wronged his underſtanding by taking to wife one of the world, not convinced of the truth, and in being married by a prieſt, and at a time when my child was dead in my houſe, and in ſeeking for a wife ſooner than a year after the deceaſe of my former one." He alſo acknowledged his drunken habits, and

being too light-minded, and altogether appeared extremely penitent.

Inſtances of "diſowning," or excommunication, occurring in the year 1674, include the caſes of *Rd. Fidoe* and *Rd. Payton*. *Fidoe* was a ſhoemaker who had "walked diſorderly," and notwithſtanding the utmoſt kindneſs and long-ſuffering exerciſed towards him he perſiſted in his evil ways, and was therefore publicly diſowned, or "wrote againſt," as it was then termed (the modern expreſſion of the ſame proceſs is "a teſtimony of diſownment is iſſued againſt" ſo-and-ſo). Shortly afterwards, *Rd. Payton*, a tailor, and his wife, were diſowned with great ſorrow on the part of the Quakers, he having once been a great ſufferer in the cauſe. (See pp. 219 and 229.)

The monthly meetings were this year held at the houſe of *Robert Smith*. Same year, *Sarah Reynolds*, of *Stourbridge*, was committed to *Worceſter* gaol; ſhe was a poor widow with five ſmall children, and was incarcerated for non-payment of the ſum of *ninepence* (!) demanded "towards the repair of the ſteeple-houſe." In 1675, *Ezekiel Partridge*, of *Stourbridge*, for refuſing to pay a church rate, and in 1676, *Alice Booker*, of *Wichenford*, a widow, for a ſimilar default, were impriſoned at *Worceſter*. Dr. *Crowther*, of *Tredington*, ſent ſeveral Quakers

to *Worceſter* gaol in the years 1676-7-8; one of them, *William Parr*, of *Shipſton*, being impriſoned above a year, and a judgment being obtained againſt him for 8*l.* tithes, he had taken from him four cows, worth 14*l.*, and at another time four cows and two horſes. The ſaid Dr. *Crowther* had the power of holding an Eccleſiaſtical Court there once in three years, to which the ſaid *William Parr* was cited "for not coming to hear common prayer," and was again committed to priſon, where he remained two years and a half. In 1678, *Jane Baylis*, the wife of *William Baylis*, of the pariſh of *Himbleton*, was, by virtue of an aſſize proceſs, brought from her huſband and ſmall children to *Worceſter* county gaol, "for not coming to ye church, as it's called, ye 8th of ye 6th month." In the minute book for the following year is an order entered---

"That a general ſearch and inſpection be made by friends profeſſing the truth with us, that they ſtand clear in their teſtimony concerning tythes, and to the prieſt, and repaire of ſteeple-houſes, and be faithful in things relating to the truth that they profeſs."

The intolerance exerciſed towards this ſect had probably had the effect of turning ſome aſide from their religious profeſſion, and inſtances of backſliding and timidity are frequently rebuked

in the minutes of the monthly meetings at *Worceſter*.

On the 12th of March, 1681, "*Ed. Bourne* was again ſent to priſon, having been apprehended while preaching at an unlawful conventicle, contrary to the liturgy of the Church of *England*, in Friars Street, where were ſeveral perſons, above the number of twenty, contrary to the late Act of Parliament, *G. Soley*, mayor." [This is the firſt mention of the place of meeting having been changed from Cooken Street to Friar Street. Their latter houſe adjoined *Wyatt's* hoſpital, and had ſubſequently a burying-ground attached. The chapel was uſed for Divine worſhip by the Quakers till 1701, when the preſent chapel near Sanſome Walk was erected, on ground given by *Ed. Bourne*, phyſician. The old chapel, however, was uſed for many years afterwards for their week-day or occaſional meetings, and was ultimately ſold for the purpoſe of a ſchool. It is now uſed as an infant ſchool; and the old burying-ground, where the bones of many friends lie peacefully ſide by ſide after the cruel buffettings of a life of perſecution, is now the reſort of happy babyhood during play-hours. The preſent chapel near Sanſome Walk had originally a paſſage into Foregate Street, but it was thought adviſable to ſtop it up to prevent the eſtabliſhment of a thoroughfare.]

But to return to the year 1681. On the 19th of the ſame month that *Ed. Bourne* was impriſoned, *F. Fincher* was alſo committed, as appears by the poſtſcript of a letter from *Ed. Bourne* (then in the city priſon) to *George Fox*. *Bourne* in his letter expreſſes the utmoſt ſatisfaction at being called to martyrdom for the ſake of his *Saviour*, obſerving that being in bonds he is "ſatisfied of being in his right place," and he ſays that *Fincher* was ſent thither a priſoner, "having been taken praying in our meeting in the ſtreet, being kept out of our meeting by conſtables." In the ſame letter he ſtates that many of the Quakers had recently been "concerned in the Chancellor's Court," of which there is the following account: "*E. Bourne*, for a demand of 2*s.*; *J. Knight*, 3*s.*; and *J. Allibone* and *R. Hill* 1*s.*6*d.* each, towards the repairing of the ſteeple-houſe called St. *Nicholas'* church in *Worceſter*, were proſecuted in the Eccleſiaſtical Court. Being cited, they appeared before the biſhop,* who ſhowed himſelf much offended at their keeping their hats on; whereupon they wrote a letter to the biſhop and his ſurrogates, excuſing their conduct on principle---that they could not conſcientiouſly contribute to the repair

* Dr. *Jas. Fleetwood*, who in his younger days, while chaplain to one of the King's regiments, at the Battle of *Edgehill* carried off the young Princes to a place of ſafety. When *Charles II* was reſtored, he preſented Dr. *Fleetwood* to the biſhopric of *Worceſter*.

of the churches, which were formerly Popiſh maſſ-houſes, with the Pope's badge, the croſs, ſtuck on one of the ends; and that the biſhop had no cauſe to be offended at their hats, when *Chriſt* Himſelf ſaid, 'How can ye believe who ſeek honour one of another, and ſeek not the honour that cometh from *God* only?' Moreover, the King, as the chief magiſtrate in the nation, had ſhown no anger at thoſe who had appeared before him with their hats on."

On the 27th of June, 1681, *John Bowater* was committed to *Worceſter* gaol at the ſuit of *Thos. Wilmot*, prieſt of *Bromſgrove*, for ſmall tithes, and removed to the Fleet priſon, and while there, a heifer worth 1*l.* 10*s.* was taken from him. Chriſtmas Day of the ſame year was ſignaliſed by a ſheriff's bailiff, named *Horſnett*, and his followers coming to the meeting at *Worceſter*, where "he aſked who was the preacher? A rude boy ſtanding by pointed to a woman, and ſaid ſhe was, which was not true, the meeting being altogether ſilent. Nevertheleſs this fellow went and ſwore before the mayor, not only that there was a conventicle but that the woman preached at it. They alſo ſwore that *F. Fincher* was at that meeting, who was then twenty-two miles off, and that *John Wareing* was there, who was then out of town. They alſo ſwore that *H. Haydon* and his wife were

there, who appeared to-day to have been at their parish church and received the sacrament there. The uncertainty of such men's evidence considered, the jury refused to find any bill of indictment, nevertheless the justices at the sessions fined several persons upon that evidence and made an order for distress, taking pewter, goods in houses and shops, malt, a mare, boards, &c., to the value of 68*l.* 11*s.*, from eight prisoners, namely *J. Allibone*, *J. Hunt*, *W. Pardoe*, *S. Morley*, *T. Haskett*, *T. Jukes*, *G. Robert*, and *J. Knight*."

About this time---12th month, 1681---*Ed. Bourne* again writes to *Fox*, saying that "he and three other friends had been excommunicated; that a parish meeting had been called to pay for a writ to throw them into prison, to which the mayor showed his unwillingness. *Bourne* had spoken to a friend to go to the said meeting to persuade them against raising the money required till they had heard them in self-defence; but he omitted to go, and 'now it must be as it may. They be very fierce here at present in taking account of us and all dissenters, sorry informers having a mind to rob and spoil us of what we have; but their work goes on not so fast as they would have it, the magistrate little countenancing them in it.'" In the following year a writ *de excom. cap.* was procured, by means of which *Ed. Bourne*

was more cloſely confined, and *Allibone*, *Knight*, and *R. Hill*, were alſo committed to *Worceſter* priſon, about the end of May, from whence they publiſhed a ſtatement of their caſe "for the conſideration of their neighbours, many of whom had not conſented to their impriſonment, but were overruled by the power of ſuch among them as were under the influence of the biſhop and his eccleſiaſtics." The caſe was "recommended to the inhabitants of *Worceſter* to view and well conſider of," the writers ſhowing that they had been impriſoned for doing no evil, but for perſuading people to dwell together in love and fear the *Lord*, and quoting Scripture copiouſly in their defence.

"The wardens of *Nicholas* pariſh had demanded 8*s*. of us towards the repairs of ye church, ſo-called, which we could not pay becauſe we believed we ſhould offend the *Lord* in doing it, and not becauſe we loved our money ſo well that we could not part with it. Theſe wardens cauſed us to be cited in the Chancellor's Court, where we after appeared, and wrote to them to ſatisfy them concerning ourſelves, and to have ſatisfaction from them; which they have not yet anſwered, nor never will, we believe; through whoſe doings we are excommunicated---that is, delivered up to the devil, as it is ſaid, which is ſad to conſider of, for we have done them no wrong, and *Chriſt* ſays 'Love your enemies.' Now if they were

Chriſt's true followers, do you believe they would deal thus by us? We do not believe they would. And do not theſe cry down the Papiſts for their cruelty---the inquiſitors of *Spain* for their perſecution---and ſay they are anti-Chriſtian therein? But ſatisfy us who can, whether a better ſpirit be the guide of theſe in their doings than ſuch are guided by, and whether it be not one and the self-ſame ſpirit which guides the one that guides the other. But for what they have done againſt us, we ſay, the *Lord* forgive them!"

On the 1ſt of July, 1683, ſixteen perſons were taken at a meeting at *Worceſter*, and detained by the officers till the time of public worſhip was over, when they were taken to the Town Hall, after which they were ſent for to come before the mayor and aldermen, and were committed to priſon; their names were, *T. Haſkett*, *W. Pardoe*, *H. Weſton*, *J. Knight*, *J. Hunt*, *Job Wareing*, *H. Smart*, *R. Roberts*, *W. Matthews*, *T. Mence*, *R. Walker*, *T. Reeves*, *E. Stanton*, *Walter Pardoe*, *Cornelius Harriſon*, and *Ed. Jones*. The charge againſt them was "for riotouſly and unlawfully aſſembling in the dwelling-houſe of a perſon unknown in Friar Street." From this it would appear that their place of meeting was as yet a private dwelling-houſe. On the next court day, as the priſoners refuſed to take the oath or to give ſureties for good behaviour, they were ſent back to priſon, and at the following ſeſſions

they were indicted for being at a conventicle and refuſing to ſwear, but their trial was deferred till February 25th, when they were fined --- *T. Mence* 4*l.* 19*s.*, *Pardoe* 40*s.*, *Reeves* 30*s.*, five others 20*s.* each, ſix others 10*s.* each, and the other two 5*s.* each; in all 16*l.* 19*s.* Many diſtraints were made this year, including one on *John Newcomb*, by warrant from the Lord *Ward*, of *Dudley* Caſtle, and Juſtice *Foley*, of *Stourbridge*, and one on *Wm. Little*, a very poor man, who had taken from him his wretched bed of chaff, a blanket, a table, grate, &c., worth altogether only 10*s.*! At the following aſſizes, the Quakers then in priſon wrote a letter to the judges and another to the jurors, appealing to their merciful conſideration of the petitioners, who were ſuffering for conſcience ſake; but an indictment was found againſt ſeveral of them, and they were fined 20*l.* each---a large ſum in thoſe days---and all of them continued in priſon. In the pariſh books of St. *Helen's*, in this city, under date of the ſame year (1683) is a liſt of the "names of pore perſons who had coats, &c., ſent by Mr. *Fra. Haynes* when he was mayor, as were bought with ye Quakers' money;"---no doubt from the fines levied upon this perſecuted ſect. Alſo in St. *Nicholas* pariſh it was ordered to proſecute all defaulters in the Eccleſiaſtical Court, except Quakers, who were to be brought before the magiſtrates.

This was a period of great perſecution, when I find in the Quakers' books frequent complaints of members "who are ſlack in coming to meeting in theſe troubleſome and ſuffering times." Another curious entry occurs in the year 1683:

"Ordered, that *George Fox's* paper concerning marrying within a year be copied out of a book called *Ye Mirrour of Juſtices*, in which thoſe who marry within a year after their wife or huſband's death are declared fit to be puniſhed by corporal puniſhment in divers manners."

This is a ſingular item, as apparently contradicting *Fox's* well-known opinions againſt coercion and corporal puniſhment, and there is probably ſome miſtake here which I am unable to explain.

A petition to *Charles II* from the priſoners in *Worceſter* gaol was drawn up in April, 1684, begging for the royal mercy as they had been incarcerated nearly two years, and expreſſing the utmoſt loyalty to His Majeſty and reſignation under their hard lot. This was ſigned by "Thy peaceable ſubjects called Quakers"—*Stanton*, *Bourne*, *Knight*, *Jones*, *Harriſon*, *Reeves*, *Smart*, *Mence*, and *Goulborne;* and it was dated "from the priſon of the city of *Worceſter*, where the *Lord* delivered thee out of the hand of thy enemies (alluding to His Majeſty's eſcape after the Battle of *Worceſter*), whoſe loving kindneſs to

thy throne pleaſe to requite by ſhowing mercy unto us, according to His will, that thou mayeſt be bleſſed therein." The reſult of this appeal is not recorded, but on the 29th of the 8th month---juſt half a year after the petition had been ſent up, ſeveral of the petitioners were ſtill in priſon, as I find in an entry under the above date, which ſets forth that

"An account by poſt letter was given to *Rich. Richardſon*, in *London*, of friends' preſent ſufferings in *Worceſter*, to be laid before the ſupreme authority of the nation, as hee and friends of the meeting for ſufferings deſired; which was as followeth: In the city priſon of *Worceſter*, priſoners therein and belonging unto it, ten in number, viz., *Ed. Bourne* and *Rd. Hill*, who have been priſoners by the writ *de excom. cap.* about two years and a half; *Thos. Reeves*, *Henry Smart*, *Thos. Mince*, *Edw. Jones*, *John Wood*, *John Hunt*, *Joſeph Allibon*, and *Geo. Roberts*, who were taken from their peaceable meeting, where all were ſilent, being kept out of their meeting-place, the magiſtrates having cauſed the doore to bee lockt up, neere which they were waiting upon *God* in ſylence, and impriſoned. It ſeems they would make theire ſoe aſſembling together to be a riot; of which number two were forth on ſecurity given for them which they knew not of, it ſeems, till it was done. The meeting they were taken from was the laſt firſt-day, which was the 26th day of the 8th month, 1684. Alſo ſince, of three

friends who died in priſon, and whilſt priſoners ſince the King came in. There were four dyed in priſon, and priſoners, the laſt of which was *Rich. Roberts*, of which an account may be given when convenient." And on the 9th of the 1ſt month, 1684-5, it was "agreed upon by this meeting that *Henry Smart* records friends of this place and county's ſufferings, in the book for ſufferings, and take the books from the printer which he ſhall ſend for the ſervice of truth, and diſpoſe of them as is uſual for that ſervice, and to record marriages, births, and burials, amongſt us."

In May, 1685, the Quakers impriſoned at *Worceſter* drew up a repreſentation of their caſe, directed to "the knights and burgeſſes of the city and county of *Worceſter* choſen to be members of Parliament," deſiring them to plead their caſe.

"Some of us (ſay they) are priſoners and have been ſo long in the city of *Worceſter*, and one in the county priſon by a writ *de excom. cap.*, for not contributing a ſmall matter towards the repair of the pariſh place of worſhip where we lived, and others for meeting together peaceably to worſhip *God*, and otherwiſe by prieſts and informers. Many of us have ſuffered much by impriſonment and the ſpoiling of our goods for non-payment of tithes to the prieſts, which to pay is according to the *Jewiſh* prieſthood, which *Chriſt* put an end to; and for not giving them what they would have us, and for peaceably

meeting together to worſhip *God;* the which we are ſtill liable to if not prevented; and ſome have been proſecuted by the act for 20*l.* a month for not coming to church; and indeed we can ſay theſe ſufferings are come upon us not for our obſtinacy and wilfulneſs---though ſome may ſay we are ſelf-willed---but it is becauſe we fear *God* and are willing to approve our hearts to Him; and we do believe you yourſelves know we are peaceable, and injurious to no man. Wherein we differ from others in religion it is only about the matter of our *God*, in which caſe tenderneſs ought to be ſhown unto us, according to His holy will. And this is all that we deſire therein, ſo pleaſe to conſider of our caſe who hereby are expoſed to ruin, with our families, and do for us as you would be done for yourſelves were it your caſe as it is ours, that the *Lord* may delight in you, and not enter into controverſy with you for your omiſſion herein. So, hoping you will conſider hereof, and do for us as herein we have deſired, truly deſiring your welfare, we remain---*T. Reeves*, *H. Smart*, *J. Hunt*, *T. Mince*, *Ed. Bourne*, *W. Pardoe*, *Ed. Jones*, *J. Woodward*," &c.

Our next note is not till the year 1687, when *Wm. Sankey* was committed to priſon in the caſtle of *Worceſter*, at the ſuit of *John Vernon*, prieſt of *Martley*, for refuſing to pay tithes, and ſubſequently an execution was levied on his goods, when nine cows, worth 27*l.*, were ſeized to pay 7*l.* 15*s.*

In the life of *William Lloyd*, biſhop of *Worceſter*, that prelate is ſaid to have "diſcourſed with the Quakers," and moreover they appear to have experienced more kindneſs at his lordſhip's hands than from many others of the eccleſiaſtical body. It is alſo ſaid that when the ſeven biſhops (of whom *Lloyd* was one, being then biſhop of St. *Aſaph*) were impriſoned in the Tower by the infatuated *James II* in 1688, *Richard Davis*, a Quaker, was the only perſon who viſited the biſhop in that place --- a circumſtance which perhaps accounts for his lordſhip's partiality.

Soon after this period the acceſſion of *William III* brought with it toleration and comparative comfort to the diſtreſſed Quakers, whoſe annoyances after this time were conſiderably leſs in degree, and the minute books are more occupied with matters of internal diſcipline. For inſtance, in 1695, it was ordered that *Rebekah Roberts* ſhould be "paid 15*s*. a quarter for eight ſcholars, which is the full ſum of the donor's will, and to give account to the monthly meeting how the ſcholars come on in their learning." About the ſame time there appears to have been much drowſineſs at the meetings, as an entry occurs to this effect:

"The unwatchfulneſs of ſome that frequent our meeting having been a burden and grief to the faithful, it was ordered that effectual care may be

taken to prevent this ſleeping in our public meetings, by tenderly adviſing ſuch as are apt to be overtaken therewith, and to let them know they muſt be openly dealt with if a more private admonition will not do."

Here is an intereſting memorandum on the ſubject of dreſs, which occurs in the ſame year (1695):

"Foraſmuch as it hath been the good advice of our friends of the yearly meeting that friends ſhall in all plainneſs ſo habitt themſelves as truth requires, and to lay aſide thoſe flowerd and ſtrip't ſtuffes, with the changeable faſhions of this world, it is thought meet by this meeting that what in us lyes it may be putt for the future into practice, and that none doe weare them or ſell them *when thoſe by them are diſpoſed of;* that thoſe conſcientiouſly concerned may be eaſed, and truth kept cleare of thoſe things; alſo that friends take care to train up their children in the fear of the *Lord*, and bring them up not only in plainneſs of habit but take care to bring them up in plain language alſo, that there may be no good *Nehemiah* grieved to hear half *Hebrew* and half *Aſhdod* ſpoken."

On the 4th of the 8th month, 1697, it was ordered "That *Sarah Barnett* do goe once a day or oftner to the priſon at the caſtle in *Worceſter*, to ſee what is wanting with our friend, *Dan. Tipper*, a priſoner there, that he may be ſupplied."

To ſhow the animus at that time prevailing againſt the Quakers, in the chancel of *Areley Kings* church may ſtill be ſeen a flat ſtone with this inſcription:

"Here lieth the body of *Wm. Walſh*, gentleman, who died on the 3rd day of November, 1702, aged 88 years, ſon of *Michael Walſh*, of *Great Shelſley*, who left him a fine eſtate in *Shelſley*, *Hartlebury*, and *Areley;* who was *ruinated by three quakers*, *three lawyers*, *and a fanatic* to help them."

The witty *Wm. Walſh*, the poet, of *Abberley*, to whom *Pope* aſcribed

"The cleareſt head and the ſincereſt heart,"

is ſuppoſed to have been the author of the above epitaph, but the circumſtances which evoked ſo angry a denunciation of his enemies are unknown to me.

The record of "ſufferings" was ſtill continued from time to time, on the ſcore of church rates, tithes, recaſting of bells, repair of "ſteeple-houſes," &c., which the Quakers were as firm in reſiſting as before. Printed papers of theſe inſtances of perſecution were procured by them and diſtributed among ſuch of the gentry, magiſtracy, and members of Parliament, as were likely to exerciſe their influence in advancing the cauſe

of toleration. An inſtance occurs in the 1700, when there is an entry of

"Delivered to *Ed. Bourne* papers of the exceſſive ſufferings of friends, ſome of whom were ſold to Juſtice *Cox*, 'Squire *Bromley*, 'Squire *Welch*, Sir *J. Pakington*, Ald. *Swift*, *Fra. Winnington*, *T. Foley*, &c.

And again in 1709---

"That *Jas. Pardoe* and *John Wood* do take care that the books are delivered to the Parliament men of this county, that they may anſwer the end for which they were printed."

At a later period (1720), *Jas. Pardoe*, *Ed. Harriſon*, *T. Ford*, and *J. Wood*, were appointed "to draw up an account as well as they can, in anſwer to the deſire of the meeting for ſufferings, in relation to the firſt public friends yt came into this county." The term "public" friends, I am informed, probably means miniſtering (or what we ſhould call preaching) members.

In 1731, *Julius Palmer*, *Wm. Roberts*, and *Wm. Cowles*, were proſecuted in the Eccleſiaſtical Court "for not paying towards rebuilding the worſhip houſe of the pariſh called St. *Nicholas*, *Worceſter*." The demands on them were reſpectively 1*l.*, 2*l.*, and 5*s.* 4*d.*

It has already been ſtated that the yearly or general meeting in *London* ſent annually a liſt of

Tos to each congregation throughout the country, with the view of preſerving diſcipline and ſelf-examination. A ſpecimen of theſe queries for the year 1708 is now ſubjoined:

"Queſtions thought needful to be aſkt by the monthly meetings.

"1.---Are your meetings kept up for worſhip both firſt and week-days, and do you keep up yr collections?

"2.---Doth truth proſper in yr meetings, and what reception hath it amongſt ye people?

"3.---Are friends in love and unity one with another?

"4.---Doth any perſon of yr meeting travail as a miniſtering friend yt is not in unity with you?

"5.---Is care taken to adviſe friends yt they do not run ſo far in debt as to bring a reproach on truth and friends?

"6.---Are friends faithful in their teſtimony againſt the payment of tithes, ſteeple-houſe rates, &c.?

"7.---Is there a record kept of marriages, births, and burials?

"8.---Are friends adviſed to inſpect their outward affairs, and make their wills in time?

"9.---Do you keep to truth's language and plainneſs of habitt, and endeavour to train up yr children therein?

"10.---Do you endeavour to p'vent idleneſs and ſleepineſs in yr meetings?

"11.---Do you endeavour that yr members (as much as may be) are of a blameleſs converſa-

tion; and ſuch as are not, are they dealt withall?

"12.---Are two faithfull friends appointed to viſit the families of friends?

"13.---Do friends ſit retired with their families to wait upon the *Lord*, and do they frequently read the Holy Scriptures?

"14.---Are friends mindful at ſuitable times to read the abſtract of the yearly meeting's epiſtles from *London* in their monthly meetings, or in ſuch other meetings or places as may ſeem convenient?

"15.---Are friends clear of defrauding the King of his dutys, cuſtoms, &c.?"

Similar queries, though ſomewhat modified, are ſtill, I believe, received from the yearly meeting. Nor was the buſineſs of the monthly meetings confined to matters of diſcipline and external deportment in religion and morals, but extended to the politics of the day, for in 1721 a meeting was appointed to be held to conſider, among other things, "how our friends ought to behave themſelves in caſe of an election to Parliament;" and at the ſaid meeting it was determined "to keep clear from taking any bribes relating to chooſing members of Parliament." Conſiderable attention was alſo paid to the education of their youth, and in 1725 a committee of Quakers were deſired "to make enquiry after a young man qualified to teach *Latin*, as maſter or uſher in the ſchool." There is very little

elſe to notice in the minute books, except that in 1741 it was agreed not to erect grave-ſtones in the burying-ground, but no reaſon is aſſigned for this ſtep; and various "diſownments" ſubſequently took place, including *Mark Barrett*, for frequenting the play-houſe, *Eliz. Power*, for becoming an actreſs, and *Jeſſe Baylie*, for eſpouſing the opinions of *Joanna Southcote*.

A large number of diaries and journals have been publiſhed by members of this ſociety, eſpecially during the eighteenth century, a few brief extracts from which will ſhow what theſe "miniſtering friends" (*i. e.* itinerant miniſters, both male and female) thought of the condition of Quakeriſm in *Worceſter* at various periods.

Samuel Bownas, a native of *Weſtmoreland*, travelled into *Worceſterſhire* about the year 1700, being then ſo young a man that ſome of the "elders" at *Worceſter* did not at firſt ſeem inclined to put faith in his credentials. He ſays---

"Was at *Worceſter* on firſt-day, and after the meeting in the forenoon an ancient friend examined me very cloſely, after meeting was over, from whence I came and for a certificate; to all which I gave him anſwers. My certificate being at my quarters in my ſaddle-bag, he could not then ſee it, but I had a very good meeting as I thought; and my landlord, *Wm. Pardoe*, a brave ſenſible elder, adviſed me not to be uneaſy at the

old friend's examining me ſo, for, ſaid he, he does ſo to every ſtranger. We went to meeting in the afternoon, which was very large, and I was largely opened, and had, as I thought, very good ſervice; but the old friend after the meeting was upon me in the ſame ſtrain to ſee my certificate, but I had it not then about me neither, at which he ſeemed much diſpleaſed. I made no reply, but told him I was very willing he ſhould ſee it; but my landlord took him up and told him he thought the young man had already ſhown us his beſt certificate in both the meetings; but nevertheleſs, ſaid he, come to my houſe in the evening, and thou ſhalt ſee it; and ſo we parted. My landlord thought he had ſhown himſelf diſagreeable in his conduct, and fearing it would be any uneaſineſs to me, ſpoke very tenderly, and like a nurſing father encouraged me by ſaying I could not ſhow him a better confirmation that I was anointed for the miniſtry than I had already done. So in the evening, after it was dark, he and many other friends came, but my landlord, the old friend, and I, went aſide, and I let him ſee what he deſired ſo much to ſee. He read it, being much pleaſed with it, and knowing ſundry friends that had ſigned it, inquired after them. We went to our friends again, who were much increaſed in number, and we had a heavenly ſeaſon, being thoroughly baptiſed together. We parted in great love and ſweetneſs, and the old friend was exceeding kind." *Samuel Bownas* again viſited the city in 1740 and 1746, and "had meetings to very good ſatisfaction."

In 1703, *Wm. Edmundſon*, another itinerating friend, viſited *Worceſter*, where he attended ſeveral meetings, "which were large, and friends well comforted in the *Lord*, whoſe preſence was with us in a plentiful manner. Next day we went to *Tewkeſbury*."

Thomas Story, in his journal, records ſeveral viſits to *Worceſter:* the firſt was "On firſt of third month (1718) went forward to the city of *Worceſter*, and lodged with *James Pardo*. The next day I was at their week-day meeting, which conſiſted moſtly of friends, and the *Lord* gave us an open comfortable time together, affording to us His comfortable preſence." In 1723, eighth month, 20th, "Went to *Worceſter*, and on the 21ſt, being the firſt of the week, was at their meeting forenoon and afternoon; the latter was very large and open, and the goſpel preached in the demonſtration and authority of it to general ſatisfaction." Again, on the 26th of ſecond month, 1731, "Went to *Worceſter*, to the widow *Pardoe's*, and the next day had a large and open meeting there; many of thoſe called gentry, with military officers and others, being preſent, and the authority of truth over all. That evening we viſited ſeveral families in town." On the firſt of the ſeventh month, 1733---

"We went to *Worceſter*, where I lodged at *James Pardoe's*, and found *John Fallowfield* and *John Baker* in town from *London*, having been at the week-day meeting here the ſixth day before. There being ſeveral ſtrangers in town, the friends appointed their meeting next day in the great meeting-houſe, and gave notice to many of the inhabitants of ſome ſtrangers to be with them, and I ſuppoſed named ſome names; upon which we had a large open meeting in the forenoon, many of the inhabitants being preſent; and the time of the afternoon meeting being put off till three o'clock, we had a very great crowd of the more reſpectable part of the inhabitants, and ſeveral of the aldermen and other magiſtrates, ſome of our friends telling us afterwards that they had never known ſo full a meeting there but once at a yearly meeting. That which fell to my ſhare in this meeting was to open the nature of that compoſure called the Apoſtles' Creed, upon which I was enlarged and drawn out to expatiate with good authority and perſpicuity, taking exception at that period therein 'He deſcended into hell,' obſerving to them that *Chriſt* ſaid to the thief upon the croſs, 'This day thou ſhalt be with me in paradiſe;' upon which I put this queſtion---'What was this *thou* in the thief, and this *me* in the *Lord Jeſus*, to be to-day in paradiſe, when the body of the thief was broken on the croſs, after the manner of criminals, and the body of *Chriſt* laid down in the ſepulchre till the third day: what then remained of *Chriſt* to go down into hell, as he was ſtated with the dead in the foregoing period, viz., was crucified, dead, and buried?' But ſince the perſons com-

poſing that creed, long ſince the days of the apoſtles, might bring it as near as they could to the tenor of the Scriptures, and finding an expreſſion in the Pſalms of *David* to this purpoſe---'Thou ſhalt not leave my ſoul in hell, nor ſuffer Thy holy one to ſee corruption'---ſeem to have miſapplied it to *Chriſt* after His crucifixion, whereas it is properly applicable to Him as ſtated in the time of prayer in the garden, when, having the weight of His approaching ſufferings and of the ſins of all mankind upon Him, being in an inſupportable agony, grappling with death, hell, and the grave, in human nature, the drops of ſweat that came from His body being, as it were, like great drops of blood, and having overcome all this, He the next day willingly laid down His life on the croſs, in the will of the *Father*, and from thenceforth triumphed over them all."

Again, in 1735, *Thomas Story's* journal ſtates---

"28th ſecond month, I went to *Worceſter*, to *James Pardoe's*, and the day after being their meeting day, it was put off till three in the afternoon, and notice given, which occaſioned the meeting to be conſiderably large, and the *Lord* favoured us with His good preſence, and opened to us the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Teſtament, with brightneſs and authority, to general ſatisfaction both of friends and others, for which we were thankful unto Him who hath all wiſdom and power, and without whom we can do nothing. Yet this meeting was ſo hard to me, for ſome time in ſilence, and the people ſo very heavy, that it put me in mind of a ſaying

of the apoſtle, 'If the dead riſe not, why are we baptiſed for the dead?' But as ſoon as a little help from the *Lord* appeared, all weakneſs and all the power of death vaniſhed as darkneſs before the day, and then in Him I aroſe and prevailed; and ſo let it be with all His miniſters in all places from henceforth throughout all generations. Amen."

James Gough, of *Kendal*, in 1737, "from *Glouceſter* rid to *Worceſter*, and ſtaid there at my kind friend, *William Beeſley's*, over third day. The week-day meeting there was to me a tendering ſeaſon, both in ſilence and under the lively miniſtry of old *John Corbyn*."

It was cuſtomary with the Quakers, when any member of their ſociety died who were diſtinguiſhed for piety and worth, to "bear teſtimony" concerning them, and theſe teſtimonies have been collected at various times and publiſhed; among them is one in 1752, to the *John Corbyn*, of *Worceſter*, mentioned above, as follows:

"A teſtimony from the monthly meeting of *Worceſter* concerning *John Corbyn*. Our ancient and well-beloved friend was born in the aforeſaid city, and was convinced of the bleſſed truth about the eighteenth year of his age, and by a diligent and fervent waiting thereon he grew ſtrong in faith and zealous for the propagation of the Goſpel of our Lord and Saviour *Jeſus*

Chriſt; and when about the thirty-fourth year of his age he came forth in a public teſtimony in great tenderneſs and Goſpel ſimplicity, and continued freſh and lively in the exerciſe of his gift until a few days before his death, to the general ſatisfaction and comfort of the ſincere hearted. He travelled as a miniſter divers times into ſeveral parts of *England* and *Wales*, in the unity and with the approbation of the meeting to which he belonged, and we believe had good ſervice in his labour of love, and that it had a tendency to ſtrengthen the weak, comfort the afflicted, and ſtir up the indolent to diligence in religious concerns both at home and abroad. He was very exemplary in attending meetings, both for worſhip and diſcipline, and ſolicitous to maintain love and unity amongſt friends; and when he apprehended anything of a contrary nature like to prevail it gave him great uneaſineſs and conflict of mind till he ſaw peace reſtored, and that pernicious weed, diſcord, extirpated. In contributions of charity he was liberal, and in hoſpitality remarkably generous. He retained his integrity, underſtanding, and memory, to his end. Much might be ſaid of this our worthy friend, but we ſhall only add, that we reſt well aſſured that he finiſhed in peace and a well-grounded hope of an immortal crown of righteouſneſs which is laid up for all thoſe who love the appearing of our Lord and Saviour *Chriſt*. He departed this life the 30th of 1ſt month, and was interred the 1ſt of 2nd month, 1752, in the Friends' burial ground in *Worceſter*, in the eighty-third year of his age."

Candia, wife of *John Corbyn*, ſurvived her huſband fifteen years, having died in 1767, at the age of ninety-ſix, after ſerving in the miniſtry for ſeventy-three years.

In the year 1749, *Daniel Stanton*, of *Philadelphia*, paſſed through this city, and ſays in his diary---"At *Worceſter* the meetings were large and ſolid, and though ſome profeſſors appeared to be gone out from the way of the ſelf-denying life, in much liberty and extravagance, yet I believe it was a time of viſitation to their ſouls."

Samuel Neale, a "miniſtering friend," viſited *Worceſter* in 1753, and in his journal ſays:

"At *Worceſter* met my endeared friend, *Catherine Payton*. I ſtaid both meetings on firſt-day, which were remarkably ſatisfactory to me. The pure life ſuccoured, and I was helped to diſcharge myſelf beyond my expectation. In the evening we had the company of ſeveral friends in a religious ſitting, which was very refreſhing and comforting; and though the apprehenſion of being ſingly at that meeting had been trying, and fearfulneſs had covered my mind, yet my good Maſter made it eaſy and joyful to me, additionally ſo by caſting His ſervant's lot there at the ſame time who had been ſo great an inſtrument in His gracious hand towards my convincement and converſion; for which continual mercies may I be favoured to hear with humility and attention the words that He condeſcends to ſpeak to my ſoul, that ſo I may obey, and witneſs true

peace to flow in my boſom; for at this time I can ſay, all that I crave is ability to worſhip the infinite all-wiſe Being aright in ſpirit and in truth."

John Churchman, of *Pennſylvania*, in 1754, in a journey through *England*, came from *Bromſgrove* to *Worceſter*, and---"On firſt-day was at two comfortable meetings, and another on the third day, and the next day attended the quarterly meeting, which was a precious time, wherein friends were comforted; and finding a concern on my mind, I went into the women's meeting, wherein the power of truth accompanied, which is the crown of our religious meetings. Here is a tender ſeed, eſpecially amongſt the female ſex, who will thrive if this divine power is kept unto. Being now clear of this city, I departed with peace to the meeting at *Tewkeſbury*."

In 1756, *Catharine Phillips*, daughter of *Henry Payton* of *Dudley* (whoſe wife was the daughter of *Henry* and *Elizabeth Fowler* of *Eveſham*), travelled conſiderably in her miniſtrations, and on arriving at *Worceſter*, her diary ſtates---

"Here it appeared right for me to get an opportunity, with ſome of the moſt experienced friends of this city, that we might together conſider about ſetting forward the good work of viſiting the families of friends in this county, of which I had a view before I reached home from *Ireland*, and when I came there I found that a

general viſit to friends' families throughout the nation had been recommended by the laſt yearly meeting at *London*. I therefore found freedom to offer myſelf to aſſiſt in that ſervice, provided the ſame could be accompliſhed ſo as not to interfere with my other proſpects of duty. I alſo recommended to the friends preſent the eſtabliſhment of a meeting for miniſters and elders in the quarterly meeting of this county. We were eminently favoured in this opportunity, and I left the city in peace, and with a hope of ſome concluſion being come to at our next quarterly meeting. I ſtaid at home a few weeks, being cloſely engaged in writing. On the 22nd of 11th month I went to *Worceſter* to attend our quarterly meeting, under a weighty exerciſe of ſpirit, having an intention, if friends ſhould accede to the aforeſaid propoſition of viſiting families, to ſtay and join them therein. Our quarterly meeting was attended in a good degree with the divine preſence, yet the ſervice of it was hard and laborious. Friends were backward in regard to giving in their names to enter upon the viſit to families, concluding themſelves unfit for ſo weighty a work. However ſome were nominated with whom I united, and concluded to ſtay and ſee how Providence might favour the undertaking. I began in great ſelf-diffidence, and went through the families of friends in the city; but the *Lord* was with me, and frequently clothed me with ſtrength and wiſdom ſuited to the occaſion. I was conſiderably favoured whilſt in the city in the exerciſe of my gift in the public meeting of friends, took leave of them in much love, and left it in peace and thankfulneſs."

She was accompanied by *Mary Oldbury*, a young woman of *Worceſter*, "who had an acceptable gift in the miniſtry;" they viſited *Perſhore* (where there was a meeting-houſe but no reſident members), *Eveſham*, *Shipſton*, &c.

John Griffiths, of *Pennſylvania*, in a journey through *Worceſter* in 1758, "attended their firſt-day meeting, and was mournfully affected therein with a ſenſe of lukewarmneſs in many profeſſors, finding it very hard for the life and power of truth to ariſe into dominion, ſo as to make them ſenſible of their ſtates. My labour was for the moſt part in ſilence, though I had ſome cloſe public ſervices. Went from thence to *Eveſham*."

Ruth Follows, in 1763, "viſited *Worceſter*; remained ſeveral days, viſiting ſick friends and attending meetings for worſhip, alſo the monthly meeting, where I could have been glad if more of the women friends had attended; however I think I may ſay we were favoured with the love of *God*, not only in the meeting for diſcipline, but in that for worſhip, and enabled to offer thankſgiving and praiſe to His moſt holy name, who is alone worthy thereof. From *Worceſter* I departed in much peace, accompanied by ſeveral friends to *Tewkeſbury*." Again, in 1785, ſhe reached *Worceſter*, "and lodged at our kind friend *Timothy Bevington's*, where at their meetings on firſt-day were alſo *Patience Brayton* and

her companion. On ſecond day my dear companion left me, ſhe being very deſirous to get home, but I was not eaſy to leave *Worceſter* ſo ſoon, and I ſtaid more than a week longer, in which time I viſited ſeveral of my acquaintance, had ſeveral ſatisfactory ſeaſons, and was much favoured at ſome of their public meetings, ſo that I came away with ſweet peace."

Martha Routh (daughter of *Henry* and *Jane Winter*, of *Stourbridge*), in her journal, about the year 1787, ſays---

"I had for ſome time had an opening proſpect of religious duty, not only to viſit the meetings but alſo the families of friends in *Worceſterſhire*, my native county, and with this impreſſion was led to look towards *Martha Howarth*, a member of our quarterly meeting, as a companion. When the time came for moving, being furniſhed with certificates from our reſpective monthly meetings, we ſet forward by way of *Cheſhire* and *Coalbrookdale*, and entered the county of *Worceſter* at *Dudley*, where the ancient and honourable family of the *Paytons* uſed to live, but they were then all removed by death or otherwiſe. Thence we went to *Stourbridge*, where I firſt drew breath. In the city of *Worceſter*, as in other places, in viſiting the families of friends, we were favoured with the company of one in the ſituation of an elder, who could bear teſtimony to what we had to miniſter, which has always been my choice in ſuch ſervice. This friend, being baptiſed with

the one baptiſm, could feelingly partake with us in the cup of ſuffering, and rejoice with us when truth was raiſed into dominion, that our ſpirits were tenderly united, and alſo to the ſeed of *God* in that place. Our labours there cloſed with a public meeting on the firſt-day evening, which was a large, open, and ſatisfactory opportunity. We then took the other ſide of the county, and were favoured in like manner with the company of helpers in the work, which cloſed at the monthly meeting at *Alceſter*. I felt preſſed in ſpirit to return to *Tredington*, about ſix miles diſtant, to our friends, *John* and *Sarah Lambley's*, though the evening was very ſtormy, the ſnow falling very thick. We got there ſafely, and were taking ſome refreſhment, when a young man, ſon of *Thomas Norton*, came into the houſe and ſeemed much affected: his father had been threatened with impriſonment for non-payment of tithes, and he ſaid two conſtables were at their houſe, and talked of taking him part of the way to *Worceſter* that night. I then believed that this was the cauſe of my being impreſſed to return there, ſo we ſent the young man back to requeſt the conſtables to ſtop awhile, as ſome friends wiſhed to ſee his father. The diſtance was about a mile, and the ſnow falling ſo thick it was not ſafe to go any other way but on foot, which we willingly did, accompanied by *John Lambley* and his valuable wife. We found *Thomas Norton* in a quiet reſigned ſtate. The men very civilly offered to leave the room and withdraw into the kitchen. Our viſit was very grateful to him, and ſeemed to ſtrengthen his mind in reſignation to the permitted trial. His

children alſo ſeemed more ſettled, and the conſtables were willing to ſtay in the village till morning. On our return through *Worceſter* we went to ſee him in his priſon-houſe, found him very compoſed, and reading *Sewel's* hiſtory. The gaoler and his wife were very kind to him. Some ſkilful friends in the city, on looking over the indictment, believed it faulty, and took a counſel's opinion, who adviſed them to bring it to an aſſize trial, which they did, and the judge quaſhed the indictment and ſet the priſoner at liberty in open court."

Sarah Lynes, a travelling miniſter, in her diary ſays---"Was at the ſelect quarterly meeting in *Worceſter* (1798), and was detained viſiting families for three weeks. We had often the company of thoſe of other ſocieties at meetings, and appointed one for the topping people of the city, which was not very large; and although we had ſatisfaction in being unprofitable ſervants---doing that which was our duty---my ſpirit hath never felt relief in *Worceſter*."

In the journal of *Thomas Shillitoe*, on the 4th day of 8th month, 1812,---"Reached *Worceſter* this evening; on fifth day ſat with friends there, in which an evidence was mercifully granted that, ſtripped as friends here are from outward miniſtry, the Miniſter of miniſters was near to help thoſe who were devoutly depending upon Him. After meeting, walked to *Tewkeſbury*."

Mary Capper, of *Rugeley*, on the 1ſt of the 1ſt month, 1821, began her viſit among the *Worceſter* families of friends. "On the 28th the afternoon meeting was largely attended, an invitation having been given more eſpecially to ſervants and apprentices employed by friends. The intent was partly anſwered, but there was a mixed company, which was not quite ſo relieving to the minds of thoſe on whom the weight of the concern reſted, as it might otherwiſe have been. However, when we have done what we can we muſt endeavour to be quiet." On the 30th ſhe left *Worceſter*, and paſſed through various towns in the county.

The well-known *Elizabeth Fry* paid a religious viſit to the Midland Counties in 1824, in company with her brother, *Samuel Gurney*, attended various public meetings, and viſited the inmates of *Worceſter* gaol.

Having thus enumerated ſome of the leading Quakers who viſited *Worceſter* from time to time, and recorded their opinions of the ſtate of the ſociety here, we may now take a glance at thoſe of the *Worceſter* members who were diſtinguiſhed for their piety or their uſefulneſs as "miniſtering friends," and whoſe "teſtimonies," made by their ſurviving brethren, and entered on the pages of their books, ſtill atteſt their worth. *John Corbyn* (1752) and his wife

have been already mentioned. The next in order of date is *Joſ. Bevington*, ſon of *Timothy* and *Hannah Bevington*, died 1771, in his twenty-firſt year. *Sarah Stephenſon*, born at *Whitehaven*, afterwards reſided at *Worceſter*, with her aunt, who had married *Samuel Corbyn*, entered into the miniſtry here, and ſubſequently ſettled in *Wiltſhire*, but viſited the *Worceſterſhire* families in 1782. *Samuel Baker Pumphrey*, born in 1801, and died before he was twenty-five years of age; he took an active part in oppoſing the ſlave trade and in promoting the ſcriptural education of the poor in this city. *Mary Beeſley*, of *Worceſter*, travelled as a miniſter about the year 1800. *Deborah Backhouſe* and *Elizabeth Johnſon*, daughters of *Rd.* and *Elizabeth Lowe*, of *Worceſter*, the former died in 1827, the latter in 1839. *Rd. Burlingham*, ſon of *John* and *Hannah Burlingham*, of *Worceſter*, travelled much as a miniſter, and died in 1840. *Lydia Newman*, daughter of *Robert* and *Ann Fry*, of *Briſtol*, married *T. Newman*, of *Worceſter*, and died in 1849, after being a miniſter for thirty-four years. The laſt notable member of the ſociety was *Samuel Darke*, who died July 20th, 1856, at the good old age of eighty-ſix. He was admitted into the ſociety on the 29th of 2nd month, 1793, and remained an active, uſeful, and conſiſtent member for the long period

of ſixty-three years, during which time he had frequent opportunities of proving that the faith which was in him was far beyond the power of perſecution to uproot or weaken. Within his memory, and that of others ſtill living, when occaſions of public rejoicing occurred for victories by the Britiſh forces by ſea or land, the Quakers objecting, on principle, to celebrate achievements attended with bloodſhed, were made to ſuffer ſeverely by excited mobs, as was the caſe in October, 1798, when *Nelſon's* victory of the *Nile* led to a great demonſtration in *Worceſter*, in the courſe of which the windows of the Quakers' reſidences were ſmaſhed, their ſhutters nailed up, and they themſelves treated with much roughness when they dared to venture out. Then, again, for nearly twenty years before *Samuel Darke* joined the *Worceſter* ſociety, there had been a conſtant commotion on the militia queſtion: the Quakers uniformly refuſing to ſerve, or to pay for ſubſtitutes, it became a queſtion whether the deputy-lieutenants were not empowered to provide ſubſtitutes and to take legal ſteps for the recovery of the coſt from the Quakers. In the year 1778, a caſe had been inſerted in the minute book, giving the opinion of *E. Thurlow* (then Lord Chancellor), that Quakers could not be legally committed to gaol by virtue of the act recited; and that, if com-

mitted, they might be diſcharged by *habeas corpus*. When *Samuel Darke's* turn came to be "drawn" into that national force, he refuſed either to ſerve or to pay, and underwent impriſonment in our city gaol; but Mr. *Wigley*, a barriſter, and ſometime M.P. for the city, diſcovering a flaw in the indictment, obtained his discharge. But by this time philanthropy had interfered in our priſon diſcipline, and gaols were no longer the filthy, abominable, life-deſtroying places they once were. *Samuel Darke* was kindly treated while in confinement, and ever after enjoyed much notoriety on account of his firmneſs of principle and the temporary martyrdom it had occaſioned. Impriſonment for non-payment of tithes and church rates continued up till a comparatively late period, when the relief acts of *George IV* and *William IV* conſiderably ameliorated the condition of the ſociety, and paſſive reſiſtance in permitting the ſeizure of goods for ſums claimed became the general practice. *Samuel Darke* was ever among the foremoſt of his brethren in demonſtrating the folly and wickedneſs of coercion in matters of religion; and at the ſame time he was the active promoter of every philanthropic movement, ſuch as temperance, the circulation of the Scriptures, home miſſions, and againſt the ſlave trade, the corn laws, and capital puniſhments. The following tribute to his memory is

copied from the *Worceſter Herald* of July 26, 1856:

"Our obituary of to-day records the departure from this life, at a good old age, of a man who, in his way, preſented many claims to the title of extraordinary. *Samuel Darke* was a conſiſtent member of the Society of Friends, and, indeed, ſo conſiſtent that his oppoſition to the powers that be---carried as it was, in ſome reſpects, beyond the pale deemed reaſonable, even by the advanced liberal ſection of the people---had always in it ſomething reſpectable. Mr. *Darke* was an unwearied worker---not a man of the tongue, but a doer of deeds---in the great cauſe of negro emancipation and the abolition of the ſlave trade. How ardently, too, and unweariedly he would labour to prevent the puniſhment of death following upon wretched criminals within his ſphere of action. We well remember having had the privilege of coöperating with him in an earneſt endeavour to avert judicial death from one whoſe execution we regarded as diſcreditable to the county, on the ground that the unhappy wretch was, and had been from childhood, of inſane mind. We did not ſucceed, but we ſhall never forget the patient toil which the aged man underwent in travelling dozens of miles on foot to procure what proved at laſt unavailing teſtimony of the truth of the facts upon which we relied. His great exertions in the anti-ſlavery cauſe were acknowledged by ſome of his fellow citizens in 1839, when they preſented him with a neat time-piece bearing the following inſcription: 'To *Samuel Darke*, for thirteen years

acting ſecretary to the *Worceſter* Anti-Slavery Society; preſented by his coadjutors in the ſacred cauſe of negro emancipation, as a teſtimonial of their eſteem for his long, unremitting, gratuitous, and unobtruſive ſervices, by which, more than by the individual efforts of any other fellow citizen, they believe the glorious triumph of negro freedom in the Britiſh colonies to have been accelerated.' His zeal and devotion to the temperance cauſe from the very firſt day on which the movement was commenced in *Worceſter*, in 1829, are well known; and the committee of the *Worceſter* Temperance Society, at a meeting laſt Tueſday evening, paſſed a reſolution recording their deep ſenſe of the loſs they had ſuſtained by his death. And now the old man reſts; but it gladdened his feebly-beating heart to know, before its pulſations ſtopped for ever, that peace had been again reſtored to his country. Such men, even when their light ſhines not from high places, have not lived in vain, ſeeing that an example has been left by them which cannot altogether fall to the ground. It were ill for *England* if ſuch examples of uſeful though humble Chriſtians were fruitleſs; and it is ill for any country in which ſuch a ſad privation of tendency to good, as that would be, could occur. The funeral of Mr. *Darke* took place on Thurſday, at the Friends' burying-ground attached to the chapel in Sanſome Walk. The deceaſed's children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren were preſent, and the committee of the Temperance Society alſo attended as a mark of reſpect. Mr. *Burgeſs* and Miſs *Weſtcombe* made a few comments on the deceaſed's life and character, and his remains

were committed to the ground in the quiet and ſimple manner uſually obſerved by the Friends."

It is pretty well known that the Quakers, as a body, are gradually diminiſhing in this part of the world. Into the cauſes of this diminution it is not my intention to enter, but ſimply to notice the fact. The ſect ſeems to have flouriſhed beſt under the antagoniſtic influences of perſecution; but when milder counſels prevailed, the ſtimulus to their bold and independent avowal of principle was withdrawn. In their minute books, about the middle of the laſt century, I find that ſome cauſe was in operation for the reduction of their numbers, and at a time, too, when means ſeem to have been adopted for proſelytiſing, which is not the caſe at preſent. Frequent complaints were then made of the thin attendances at meetings; and in the 10th month, 1776, an epiſtle was iſſued to the *Worceſterſhire* friends, from *Edmund Gurney*, *Jer. Waring*, *Thos. Wagſtaffe*, *Geo. Gibſon*, *Tim. Bevington*, and *John Burgeſs*, who had been on "a goſpel viſit" to the various meetings in the county, ſtimulating them to increaſed vigilance and attention to the light within them. Emigration and a lack of proſelytiſing energy ſeem to have been the chief cauſes of the diminiſhed ranks of the Quakers, rather than ſeceſſions of members. Only one inſtance of

the latter has come before my obſervation, and that occurs in the pariſh books of St. *Peter's*, where is the following entry:

"*Rebecka Nicholas*, aged twenty-three, born and bred a Quaker, was baptiſed Sep. 3, 1759."

In the flouriſhing days of this ſociety there were chapels and congregations at *Kidderminſter*, *Redditch*, *Eveſham*, *Perſhore*, *Droitwich*, *Malvern*, *Bromſgrove*, *Stourbridge*, *Bewdley*, *Dudley*, *Shipſton*, &c. Moſt of theſe are now ſhut up and ſold; and where ſtill in exiſtence, as at *Dudley*, *Stourbridge*, *Bewdley*, *Eveſham*, and *Malvern*, they are but ſeldom uſed, or only by very diminiſhed numbers. *Shropſhire* is now combined with this county for the purpoſe of the Quakers' quarterly meetings, but this ſeems to have been no great acquiſition, in point of numbers at leaſt, as there are no members left at *Shrewſbury*, and the only town in that county which furniſhes any members to this quarterly meeting is *Coalbrookdale*, with twenty-five members only! At the ſame time it muſt be ſtated that the *Stourbridge* and *Dudley* meetings are now aſſigned to *Warwickſhire* North, and *Shipſton* to *Warwickſhire* South. A venerable member of the ſociety in *Worceſter* informs me that, within her recollection (about ſeventy years ago), they numbered about two hundred members in this city, and had

two good ſchools; the preſent number is not much above eighty. Some of this decreaſe ſhe attributes to the fact that, when the glove trade was flouriſhing here, many of the maſters and their men were Quakers, who, when the adoption of Mr. *Huſkiſſon's* policy removed the greateſt portion of the trade from *Worceſter*, were compelled to remove alſo and ſeek other fields for their enterpriſe.

Some modification of the Quakers' diſcipline has recently been introduced, whereby any plain, unadorned ſtyle of dreſs, without peculiarity or preciſion of cut, is permitted, and I believe that perſons may now be married who are not members but only attendants at their meetings. Pictures and elegant though not ſhowy furniture may alſo now be ſeen in their dwellings, and on the whole it is evident that the ſociety is at preſent in a tranſitional ſtate.

The ſyſtem of intermarriage among Quakers having been denounced in ſome recent publications, as the fruitful ſource of diſeaſe, abridged life, &c., I think it right to ſtate, in concluſion, that however true this may appear to be as an abſtract propoſition, the great age of many of the *Worceſter* Quakers, both living and dead, and the general ſtatiſtics of the body at large, give evidence loudly in favour of their temperance, cleanlineſs, moderate habits, diſcipline, and mental

quietude. Of 300 deaths throughout the kingdom, in 1856-7, the average age was fifty-three years, two months, and a fraction; of 322 deaths in 1857-8, the average was fifty-one years and three months; of 307, in 1858-9, fifty years and one month; while the average duration of a generation of the public at large is ſuppoſed to be about thirty years.

Wesleyans.

"Men my brothers, men the workers, ever reaping ſomething new;
That which they have done but earneſt of the things that they ſhall do:
Yet I doubt not through the ages one increaſing purpoſe runs,
And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the proceſs of the ſuns."

TENNYSON.

METHODISM has been called the great Engliſh ſchiſm of the eighteenth century. *Oxford* was its cradle, *John Wesley* its parent, and the Counteſs of *Huntingdon* its nurſing mother. With the two *Wesleys* was aſſociated the great *Whitefield*, the ſon of a *Glouceſter* innkeeper, and who afterwards became chaplain to the Counteſs. Theſe were the chiefs of the Methodiſt movement, under whoſe leaderſhip three grand detachments of Chriſtian warriors were led forth to do battle with the world, the fleſh, and the devil. The ſeparation of the forces was occaſioned by the doctrine of election; the followers of *John* and *Charles Wesley* adopting Arminian views of univerſal re-

demption, and thoſe of *Whitefield*, Calviniſm; while the Counteſs, at the ſame time that ſhe leaned towards the religious principles of her chaplain, choſe to act herſelf as the founder of a ſect.

Dr. *Burton* has ſaid that "the church of *Chriſt* has no deadlier enemies than thoſe who ſeek to divide it into parties, and who are always looking out for points of difference rather than thoſe of agreement." This may be true in caſes where the points of difference are of no higher importance than mere matters of candleſticks, flowers, and ſurplices; but the remark ſurely loſes its force and ſignificance when aimed at that great religious movement which in the middle of the laſt century arouſed both the Eſtabliſhed Church and all ranks of diſſenters from the lethargy into which they had fallen, and may be likened to the ſtirring of the waters in *Betheſda's* pool by the Angel who brought healing in his wings. The ſtate of the Church Eſtabliſhment at that period is well known and admitted by her own members: both clergy and laity had forgotten their relative poſitions, and were mixed up together in the chaſe, the bull-bait, and the beer-houſe; and when ſuch an article as a ſermon was procurable in a village church, the fundamental doctrines of faith in *Chriſt* and the neceſſity of a holy life were but ſeldom heard. Nevertheleſs, when a "Goſpel

preacher," like ſome comet, bringing life and health from another ſyſtem, appeared in the neighbourhood, not unfrequently did the parochial miniſter aſſemble his rural forces, and eject the intruder by pitchfork and cudgel; while thoſe who made no hoſtile demonſtration againſt the movement were content to leave it to its own energies, or meet it with withering contempt. We can well imagine a churchman of that time writing his own epitaph thus:

> "This be my record: ſober, not auſtere,
> A churchman honeſt to his church lies here;
> Content to tread where wiſer feet had trod,
> He loved eſtabliſhed modes of ſerving *God*,
> Preached from a pulpit rather than a tub,
> And gave no guinea to a *Bible* club."

Nor was this ſpiritual deadneſs peculiar to the church: the ſame opiate had affected every religious community, and thoſe who were not lulled into an ignoble repoſe had better have ſlept than been employed as they were---though ſomewhat drowſily it is true---in ſcattering the ſeeds of Socinian and Antinominian error.*

All honour then be to thoſe young and ardent minds who aſſociated together in our principal ſeats of learning, reſolved on braving the ridicule of their fellows and the perſecution of a ſemi-barbarous world, in order to reawaken the echoes

* See *Life of Rowland Hill.*

of goſpel truth in the dark corners of the land, and to carry out their profeſſion---undertaken at baptiſm---of Chriſtian ſoldiers fighting againſt the enemies of the croſs. Nor muſt we fail to bear in mind that it was no part of the ſcheme of theſe great and good men to found a new church or to ſecede from the old one; their aſpirations were to continue within her communion, while they pleaded for greater ſtrictneſs of life and more zeal in the miniſtry. This was the head and front of their offending, for which they were driven forth from the pale of the Eſtabliſhment; and having, as ſportſmen ſay, "taken to the open," they did the work of their Maſter in fields and highways, in barns, and all other available places, and gathered together the halt, the lame, and the blind, for whoſe ſouls no man had cared. Lay preaching was their great agency, and this was the "irregularity" of which the Church complained---under the conviction that it was preferable for their fellow creatures to die in fatal ignorance than to have their converſion effected in an irregular manner.

The year 1729 is conſidered as the time at which Methodiſm began, when the *Wesleys* and a few other ſtudents at *Oxford* (afterwards joined by *Whitefield*) formed a little aſſociation for their common ſpiritual improvement, as was ſubſequently done alſo by Dr. *Stillingfleet* (afterwards

Prebendary of *Worceſter*), and at *Cambridge* by *Rowland Hill* and a ſmall body of ſtudents who would expound, pray, and invite others to do likewiſe, but were expelled from their college by the Vice-Chancellor. It was not till the year 1740, however, that the firſt Methodiſt ſociety was formed (in Moorfields, *London*), more than twenty years before a ſociety was eſtabliſhed at *Worceſter*. The inſtruments for the propagation of this new diſcipline were generally perſons from the lower claſſes of ſociety; but the *Huntingdon* family took it under their patronage, and there were two or three other ladies of rank who attached themſelves to the Counteſs, and encouraged the labours of the Methodiſt preachers, giving them acceſs to many in the ranks of the ariſtocracy, and thereby greatly increaſing their influence. The late Mr. *Wilberforce* and Mrs. *Hannah More*, too, contributed much to the advancement of Methodiſm in this country. But it was to the character and abilities of *Wesley* and *Whitefield*, in the firſt inſtance, that its extraordinary progreſs was mainly due. *Whitefield*, as a popular preacher, has probably never been ſurpaſſed---at leaſt if we may judge from the effects of his appeals to his audiences. Who can forget the deſcription of his open-air aſſemblies at *Kingswood*, and the electric ſenſations occaſioned among the poor colliers by him

"Whoſe reſiſtleſs eloquence
Wielded at will that fierce democratie?"

Here is his own ſketch of one of thoſe gatherings:

"The trees and hedges were full. All was huſh when I began; the ſun ſhone bright, and *God* enabled me to preach for an hour with great power, and ſo loud that all, as I was told, could hear me. Bleſſed be *God*, Mr. —— ſpoke right: 'the fire is kindled in the country!' To behold ſuch crowds ſtanding together in ſuch an awful ſilence, and to hear the echo of their ſinging run from one end of them to the other, was very ſolemn and ſtriking. As the ſcene was new, and I had juſt begun to be an extempore preacher, it occaſioned many inward conflicts. When twenty thouſand people were before me, I had not, in my own apprehenſion, a word to ſay either to *God* or them. But I never was totally deſerted; and my confidence was increaſed when I ſaw the white gutters made by the tears which plentifully fell down their black cheeks---black as they came out of their coal pits. The open firmament above me, the proſpects of the adjacent fields, with the ſight of thouſands and thouſands, ſome in coaches, ſome on horſeback, and ſome in the trees, and at times all affected and drenched in tears together; to which ſometimes was added the ſolemnity of the approaching evening; was almoſt too much for, and quite overcame me."

Whitefield, it will thus be ſeen, held unbounded ſway over the elements of popularity. *Wesley*,

while leſs commanding, was more inſinuating, and poſſeſſed, both in writing and preaching, a perſpicuous and pleaſing ſimplicity. *Whitefield* had comparatively little reading, while *Wesley* was both a gentleman and a ſcholar. He had, moreover, a ſtrong and capacious mind for government. His ſermons ſeldom exceeded half an hour in length, and his diſlike for rant and fanaticiſm was ſhown on all occaſions. "Scream no more (ſays he in a letter to one of the preachers in connection with him), ſcream no more at the peril of your ſoul. Speak earneſtly as you can, but do not ſcream. Speak with all your heart, but with a moderate voice." He is known to have ſeverely reproved two of his preachers, *Bell* and *Owen*, for what was once called, by *Grattan*, "the noiſy familiarity of the ſectaries with their *God*," for their irreverent expreſſions in prayer, their accounting the work of the imagination to be the work of the Spirit, their ſuppoſing the preachers of all other denominations were doomed to be loſt, and their undervaluing reaſon and knowledge generally; and at length he diſmiſſed *Bell* altogether for his ſcreaming and fanaticiſm. With all this ſenſe of decorum and public decency, *Wesley* propounded as one of his leading principles the reality of perceptible and inſtantaneous converſion; and the general reader, on peruſing his diary, cannot but

be ſtruck with the buſineſs-like manner in which ſtatiſtical information is ſupplied to him with regard to theſe new births, which are calculated, numbered, and labelled, like ſo many tons of goods or bales of cotton in a railway warehouſe. Here are ſpecimens: "Laſt week eleven were juſtified, and this week eleven more, eight of whom received remiſſion of ſins, and three a clear heart, and a troop are waiting for the moving of the waters." In *Limerick*, "fourteen have a clear ſenſe of being renewed, and ſeveral have been juſtified this week." *Samuel Meggott* writes to him from *Barnard Caſtle*---"Within ten weeks at leaſt twenty perſons in this town have found peace with *God*, and twenty-eight the pure love of *God*. This morning, before you left us, one found peace, and one the ſecond bleſſing; and after you was gone two more received it."

The great excitement attending the new ſtyle of preaching produced its uſual effects: when a claſs aſſembled, one or more of its members would fall into agonies, while the remainder were "wreſtling with *God*" for them. One of the afflicted would, by and by, ſpring on his feet and ſhout aloud "My ſins are forgiven." At *Limerick*, on one occaſion, the whole congregation "were in floods of tears; they trembled, they cried, they prayed, they roared aloud, all of

them lying on the ground; they began to ſing, but could not riſe, and ſang as they lay along; and when we concluded, ſome of them could not go away, but ſtayed in the houſe all night." *Wesley*, probably, did not go the length of ſuppoſing that theſe frenzied fits ſhould be called by the name of religion, or that the fright and painful tenſion in which the human mind was kept by them, during the contagion of a crowded room by night, could be expected ultimately to advance the kingdom of Him whoſe Spirit worketh in the quiet breathing of love and peace. Such worſhipping by great outcries and bodily manifeſtations is more to be likened to the religion of thoſe heathens who adored their god *Hercules* with ſhowers of ſtones and brickbats, under the notion that it would be the moſt acceptable form of homage to one who all his life long had been accuſtomed to brave phyſical difficulties. The worſhippers of *Baal* cut themſelves with ſtones, and the Catholic devotee volunteered a vaſt amount of corporal ſuffering, but we nowhere learn that tortures ſuch as theſe are acceptable in the ſight of that *God* who has ſaid by His prophet *Joel*, "Rend your hearts, and not your garments." The founder of Methodiſm, it ſeems, had but little ſympathy for extravagance, and attacked with equal goodwill *Welſh* Jumpers, *Engliſh* formaliſts, and Popery in

its *Iriſh* ſtrongholds, yet there is reaſon to believe that he often miſtook for divine influence what was nothing but the overflow of a heated enthuſiaſm; and it is extraordinary that ſo acute a man ſhould have tolerated to any extent thoſe bodily contortions which were a melancholy caricature of the genuine effects of converſion. *Wesley* was a plain writer, but then he wrote not for fame: the aim of his life was to do the work of his Maſter, and to the performance of that work he devoted fifty years, during which period it is eſtimated that he travelled 225,000 miles---a diſtance more than equal to nine times round the globe! He was a viſitor of priſons, hoſpitals, and houſes of mourning; and it has been truly ſaid that "wherever there was a friend to ſerve or a ſoul to ſave, he readily repaired. He thought no office too humiliating, no condeſcenſion too low, no undertaking too arduous, to reclaim the meaneſt of *God's* offspring." *Wesley* was peculiarly a genial man---not moroſe or gloomy, nor like thoſe Puritans of whom it was ſaid that they would not put on a corn-plaſter without ſcraping a text over it; he was not one of thoſe ſpiritual hypochondriacs who depreſs their natural ſpirits with a rigour which ſhuts out the light of day from the chamber of their hearts, and keeps it in conſtant gloom and ſhadow, as if a ſmile or the enjoyment of a cheerful ſunbeam would imperil

their ſalvation. In company he was among the moſt agreeable; he was forgiving, unſuſpicious, and liberal to a fault, with a temper warm, but judgment excellent. In him old age appeared delightful, like an evening without a cloud. The great object of his life was to revive the doctrines and extinguiſhed ſpirit of the Church of *England:* he was treated as a fanatic when he ſhould have been deemed the beſt friend of the Church; but he lived to ſee himſelf reſpected if not beloved by all.

Wesley was ſimplicity itſelf, but yet not devoid of humour, an inſtance of which occurs in his account of a viſit to *Doncaſter*, where he mentions an aſs walking gravely in at the gate and up to the door of the houſe, where it lifted up its head and ſtood ſtock ſtill in a poſture of deep attention. "Might not the dumb beaſt (ſays Mr. *Wesley*) reprove many who have far leſs decency and not much more underſtanding?" And yet a ſtrange compound of contradictions was this ſame man; for with all his ſcholarſhip and good ſenſe he practiſed ſortilege---that is, to refer promiſcuouſly to the firſt *Bible* text you open upon, for advice whether to undertake or abandon any important ſtep in life---a religious kind of fortune-telling, reminding one of the *Sortes Virgilianæ* of *Charles I*, and the ſuperſtition which impelled *Buonaparte* to conſult

oracular problems. He doubted, too, whether any one could tell the real diſtance of the ſun, moon, or planets, at the ſame time that he believed in demonology and poſſeſſion by foul ſpirits. Once, he declares, "a vehement noiſe aroſe and ſhot like lightning" through a congregation at *Briſtol*, amidſt terror and confuſion indeſcribable: benches were broken, and much other damage done, and he aſcribes this to preternatural influences. Notwithſtanding this trait of his character, he is known to have preached at Spitalfields, when ſo great a commotion was excited by the confident expectation that the end of the world was to be on the 28th of February, 1763, when thouſands wandered into the fields in a ſtate of diſtraction, expecting to be ſwallowed up by an earthquake. His ſermon was intended to ſhow the abſurdity of a ſuppoſed human foreknowledge of ſuch an event; and he himſelf went home to bed, and was faſt aſleep by ten o'clock, while the ſtreets and fields were ſwarming with an excited multitude.

In his annual tour throughout the United Kingdom, he preached in churches wherever he could obtain permiſſion---as at St. *Andrew's*, *Worceſter*---but otherwiſe in barns, old buildings, or in the open air. He was a great admirer of cathedral ſervices, which he attended whenever an opportunity preſented itſelf; and once he took

the ſacrament with Biſhop *Lavington*, his old opponent. Nor was he ſo abſorbed in his own vocation as to be perverſely diſregardful of the natural beauties of *God's* creation or the works of human art which his inceſſant travelling brought before his view: here and there he peeped into beautiful gardens, ſuch as Mr. *Shenſtone's* Leaſowes, at *Haleſowen*, or *Hagley* Park, or aſcended the *Malvern* hills, and old caſtles and other "lions" did not eſcape him on his way. It is intereſting to notice another inſtance of his genial mind, that when once at *Worceſter* he attended an aſſize trial, and in his diary reports with great ſatisfaction the humane efforts of the Judge and counſel to reſtore a poor, half-ſtarved, pocket-picking boy to a better courſe of life, inſtead of glutting themſelves with his puniſhment, as was too much the ſpirit of the laſt century.

Eveſham appears to have been the firſt place he viſited in this county, and there he preached in the Abbey Church as he calls it. The magiſtrates in that town ſeem to have been worthy deſcendants of thoſe who had ſo maltreated the Quakers (ſee page 208), for they frequently encouraged the mob againſt *Wesley*, yet he appears not only to have eſcaped injury but to have won the hearts of the common people there as elſewhere.

The firſt recorded viſit of *John Wesley* to

Worceſter was in the autumn of 1760, when on his way from *Ireland* to the ſouth-weſt of *England.* At *Wolverhampton* he hired freſh horſes for *Worceſter*, and on the road one of the horſes fell, and gave him ſuch a ſhock that he was ſeized with a violent bleeding of the noſe which nothing would ſtop, "ſo (ſays he) we were obliged to go a foot-pace two miles and then ſtay at *Broadwaters*, Auguſt 28th; ſoon after we ſet out the other horſe fell lame; an honeſt man at *Worceſter* found this was owing to a bad ſhoe; a ſmith cured this, but at the ſame time, by paring the hoof too cloſe, he effectually lamed the other foot, ſo that we had hard work to reach *Glouceſterſhire.*" From thence he went on to *Briſtol* and *Cornwall.* In the following year he does not mention *Worceſter*, but went from *Oxford*, via *Eveſham* and *Redditch*, to *Birmingham* and *Dudley.* At *Eveſham* he there found "a poor ſhattered ſociety, almoſt ſunk to nothing, and no wonder, ſince they have been almoſt without help till Mr. *Mather* came." He then preached in the Town Hall to large congregations, "many of whom came determined neither to hear themſelves nor allow others to hear, but they were overruled, and behaved with tolerable decency, till the ſervice was over, when they roared amain;" he, however, walked the ſtreet among them and they offered not the leaſt rude-

neſs. At *Dudley* there was a large and quiet congregation. "The ſcene here (he ſays) is changed ſince the dirt and ſtones of this town were flying about me on every ſide."

No further account of his viſits to *Worceſter* occurs till four years afterwards, namely, in March, 1765, when he rode from *Stroud* to this city, "and had the pleaſure (ſays he) of ſpending an hour with Mr. *R*——, a ſenſible, candid man; but who is proof againſt prejudice? eſpecially when thoſe who labour to infuſe it converſe with him daily, and thoſe who ſtrive to remove it not two hours in a year."

On the 16th of March, 1768, occurs this entry in Mr. *Wesley's* diary:

"In the afternoon I preached at *Upton*, and then rode on to *Worceſter*, but the difficulty was where to preach. No room was large enough to contain the people, and it was too cold for them to ſtand abroad. At length we went to a friend's, near the town, whoſe barn was larger than many churches; here a numerous congregation ſoon aſſembled, and again at five, and at ten in the morning. Nothing is wanting here but a commodious houſe; and will not *God* provide this alſo?"

The barn above-mentioned is ſuppoſed to have been the old Workhouſe in the *London* Road, on the ſite of which now ſtands the reſidence of Mr. *George Chamberlain.*

A good ſpecimen of *Wesley's* labours, and his devotion to the cauſe on which he had ſet his heart, is contained in the following entry:

"March 14, 1769. We rode towards *Tewkeſbury*, notice having been given of my preaching about noon at a houſe a mile from the town, but we could not get to it, the floods were ſo high; ſo I intended to go ſtraight to *Worceſter*, but one informing me a congregation from all parts was waiting, we ſet out another way, and waded through the water; the congregation, too, ſeemed quite earneſt, ſo that I did not regard my labour, but the going and coming was hard work, ſo that I was a little tired before we came to *Worceſter*. I began preaching about ſix in the Riding Houſe. Abundance of people were deeply attentive, but toward the cloſe a large number of boys made a great noiſe. When we came out, men and boys joined together in ſhouting and puſhing to and fro; many were frightened, but none hurt. Hitherto could Satan come, but no farther!"

The Riding Houſe is an old building ſtill ſtanding cloſe to the bowling-green in Frog Lane (now dignified by the unneceſſary name of Diglis Street). It was uſed for teaching ſoldiers riding, and for adminiſtering to them the diſcipline of flogging. The building has an open timber roof, but preſents no point worthy of remark, except that it would probably contain ſome 300 or 400 people ſtanding. It was ſubſequently uſed for a

pariſh ſchool until the preſent ſchool was built. Lectures were alſo delivered there (among others) by Mr. *Bell*, one of the founders of the *Bell* and *Lancaſter* ſyſtem of education, as may be remembered by many ſtill living. The old houſe, which is ſtill the property of the Government, is now rented by Meſſrs. *Kerr* and *Binns* for ſtoring up their moulds, uſed in the porcelain manufacture. In a humble cottage in the ſtreet now oppoſite the Riding Houſe ſtill lives a widow, named *Jane Crump*, aged ninety-three, who was born in that ſtreet and has lived there all her life, who well recollects having ſat under *John Wesley* on ſeveral occaſions during his viſits to *Worceſter*. That however was not at the Riding Houſe, but at the chapel ſubſequently erected in New Street. I have had the privilege of an interview with this matriarch, who ſtill retains her faculties, and remembers the laſt text ſhe heard him preach, namely, "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth." She continues to entertain a high opinion of *Wesley* as being a great friend to the poor, and more than that (as the old lady ſaid to me with conſiderable emphaſis), "he preached the Goſpel too, ſir." The people uſed to riſe as early as five in the morning to hear him preach, and, ſo far from inſulting him, would go out ſome diſtance from the city to meet him when they knew of his coming to *Worceſter*, and eſcort him

into the town, as he rode on horſeback or in a chaiſe. Mrs. *Crump* has alſo heard *Whitefield* preach in *Worceſter*, but the poor old lady was more intent on impreſſing upon me the fact of her having been a witneſs, from her bedroom window, of the cruel floggings which were inflicted on the ſoldiery in the yard of the Riding Houſe, and the frequent attempts made by the citizens to break in and reſcue the ſufferers, which attempts were alſo rigorouſly repulſed by a guard of ſoldiers, ſword in hand. Mrs. *Crump* is a link connecting three or four generations; and it is ſomething which I ſhall not fail to remember with pleaſure that I have converſed with one who frequently heard *Wesley* preach.

Another venerable inhabitant of *Worceſter* has but recently departed from us, who was perſonally known to the great reformer, *John Wesley* having viſited at her father's houſe; and his laſt letter, I believe, was found among her papers when ſhe died, in the year 1856, at the age of eighty-ſix. Of her it has been ſaid that "her life was unceaſingly devoted to good objects, in the promotion of which ſhe was frequently ſubjected to ridicule and abuſe, but nothing diverted her from her benevolent and Chriſtian career. The eſtabliſhment of the *Worceſter* City Miſſion was mainly owing to her efforts, the committee holding their meetings at her houſe. She was

held in great reſpect by all denominations of Chriſtians, eſpecially the Weſleyans, in whoſe communion ſhe had remained for ſeventy years, and who, two years before her death, placed her portrait in the veſtry of their chapel in Pump Street." The following lines, written to her memory, though not characteriſed by elegance of diction or purity of ſtyle, may be permitted here as a rough doggrel deſcription of this aged Chriſtian *(Suſan Knapp)*:

Through earth's wilderneſs vaſt,
And death's *Jordan* at laſt,
Siſter *Knapp* hath got ſafely home:
By bright ſeraphs convey'd,
And in white robes array'd,
To the heavenly *Canaan* hath come.

She hath gone to her reſt,
And her ſpirit is bleſt
For ever with *Jeſus* her Lord;
Now, with rapturous gaze,
She beholds His loved face,
Which on earth ſhe ſo much ador'd.

She is gone!---but the tear
To her memory dear
Still lingers in many an eye;
While the ſick and the poor
And the aged no more
See this "Siſter of Mercy" paſs by.

Her houſe and her heart
Were alike ſet apart
To welcome the friends of the *Lord;*
And the time-honour'd ſpot
Shall not ſoon be forgot
Which ſuch peace and reſt did afford.

The lov'd *Bible* her guide,
A few tracts by her ſide,
And counſels and cautions her ſtore:
See her wending her way
Through the city each day,
To do what ſhe could for the poor.

She was known in the ſtreet
By her dreſs, plain and neat,
And her countenance wearing a ſmile
When the young ſhe addreſs'd,
Or the aged hand preſs'd;
For in her pure heart was no guile.

With what earneſt deſire
She would oft-times inquire
What more for *God's* cauſe could be done!
And it was her delight
Loſt ſinners to invite
To *God's* houſe, that their ſouls might be won.

Weep not!---thou dear friend
Who her ſteps did attend,
And ſay, who will ſtand in her ſtead?
For thy loſs is her gain;
Therefore mourn not in vain,
Be thyſelf "baptiſed for the dead."

T. L.

But to return from this epiſode. By the year 1770 the Weſleyan cauſe in *Worceſter* ſeems to have progreſſed conſiderably. That appears to have been the firſt year in which this circuit was regularly organiſed, and in the conference minutes *James Glaſbrook* and *Martin Rodda* were the firſt preachers named to travel the circuit. The oldeſt book in the poſſeſſion of the *Worceſter* Weſleyans is entitled *The Quarterly Book for Glouceſterſhire Circuit*, 1771, the circuit then including

the towns and places of *Stroud*, *Painſwick*, *Worceſter*, *Broad Marſton*, *Honeybourne*, *Admington*, *Oxill*, *Bengeworth*, *Kemerton*, *Tewkeſbury*, *Stanley*, *Cheltenham*, *Glouceſter*, *Beeſley*, *Brimſcombe*, and *Bewdley*. Various towns in *Worceſterſhire* were ſubſequently added, and in 1787 the circuit was divided, the *Glouceſterſhire* portion branching off, and *Worceſter* then became the head of its own circuit. The firſt ſtewards of the circuit, for 1771, were *Charles Freebery* and *James Nind*. It is curious to note the financial condition of Weſleyanism in thoſe days as compared with the preſent; for inſtance, at *Worceſter*, the firſt quarterly collection for the ſupport of the miniſtry amounted to but 2*l*., at *Tewkeſbury* 1*l*. 1*s*., at *Glouceſter* 5*s*., *Cheltenham* 5*s*. 6*d*., and other places in the circuit in proportion; whereas now there are two miniſters ſupported at *Worceſter*, one at *Tewkeſbury*, two at *Glouceſter*, and three at *Cheltenham*, all thoſe places (as likewiſe *Stroud*) being now heads of circuits. The earlieſt recorded plan of the *Worceſter* (or *Glouceſterſhire*) circuit was as follows:

"The brother that goes on the circuit from *Worceſter* ſets off immediately after breakfaſt on Friday morning, dines at Mrs. *Canning's*, ſchool-miſtreſs, at *Bengeworth;* Saturday morning, after breakfaſt, to *Broad Marſton*, Mr. *Henry Eden's;* Sunday forenoon, preach at *Broad Marſton*, and

in the evening at *Weſton*, Mr. *Adkins;* Monday, dine at Mrs. *Guy's*, *Hampton*, near *Bengeworth*, and after come to *Perſhore* to preach, at Mr. *Jones's*, barge owner; Tueſday morning, return to *Worceſter;* Wedneſday, go to *Stourport*, Mr. *Cowell's;* Thurſday, to *Bewdley*, Mr. *James Lewis*, near the church, ſhoemaker; Friday, to *Kidderminſter*, Mr. *James Bell*, ſhopkeeper, Mill Street; Saturday evening, preach here alſo, and Sunday morning, which falls to their turn in this manner once in the month, becauſe the next preacher that comes to this part of the circuit goes back from *Kidderminſter* to *Bewdley* on the Saturday morning, in order to preach there the oppoſite Sunday morning once in the month. From each of theſe places, *Bewdley* and *Kidderminſter*, the preacher returns after Sunday morning preaching to dine at *Stourport*, and preach at half-paſt two and ſix in the evening. Monday, after breakfaſt, you go to the *Clee Hills*, through *Cleobury*---a new place (ſociety this year begun, 1791). Tueſday of late has fallen vacant, through giving up a place in that country. I hope the *Lord* will open a door for you ſomewhere to fill up this day. Wedneſday, dine at *Stourport*, preach at night. Thurſday morning, return to *Worceſter*, having now completed your fortnight's round. The next preacher then takes the above circuit. You ſtay in *Worceſter* a whole fortnight."

In 1797, the following was the plan of the circuit :

"The preacher who goes to the country circuit sets off from *Worcester* on Saturday morning to *Omberſley*, where is a new ſociety of eighteen members formed this year. On Sunday, preach at *Droitwich* at nine o'clock in the morning, return to Mr. *Groves's* at *Omberſley* to dine, and preach again at *Droitwich* in the evening. N.B. *Droitwich* is a new place opened this year, and in which we have a very good proſpect. Here call at Miſs *Ruſsell's*. From hence proceed on Monday to *Bromſgrove*, *John Bott's*, needle maker. In this place is a ſociety of nineteen members, ſteady, but not very lively. Tueſday: Mr. *Samuel Randle's*, *Netherwood*. The proſpect in this place is not very good, as the congregations are very ſmall; yet there is a ſociety of eight members, not very lively. Wedneſday: *Worceſter*, a day of reſt. Thurſday: *Bengeworth*, Mrs. *Canning's*, ſchoolmiſtreſs. Here is the oldeſt ſociety in this part of the kingdom---once a large and flouriſhing one, but now reduced to fourteen members, and theſe not much in earneſt. Friday: dine at Mr. *Nathaniel Eden's*, *Honeyburn*, and then proceed to Mr. *William Eden's* at *Broad Marſton*. Preach at night at *Pebworth*. Here we have no ſociety, as the few ſerious people who attend here belong to *Broad Marſton* ſociety. Saturday: *Weſton*, Mr. *Caleb Adkins*. Here is a lively ſociety of twenty-four members. Mr. *Adkins* is one of the circuit ſtewards. Sunday: in the morning in ſome of the little villages in the neighbourhood of *Weſton*, and in the afternoon or evening, *Broad Marſton* as above. Monday: *Bidford*, Mr. *Ruſſell's*. Here is a new ſociety of twenty-five members, in earneſt, but ignorant and

weak. Tueſday: *Great Allon*, Mr. *Hemming's*. We have preached here for ſome months, but have not attempted to form a ſociety. Wednesday: *Alceſter*, *Michael Flaherty*, carpenter. We have not preached long in this place. Thurſday: *Perſhore*, at *Owner Jones's* houſe. There was once a ſociety in this place, but it was diſſolved before I came to the circuit. We gave up preaching there for ſome months, but at the earneſt entreaty of ſome poor people returned to it again. Friday: return to *Worceſter* for the fortnight."

An itinerant preacher's life, in thoſe days, was far from a pleaſant one, in a worldly point of view, what with hard riding, bad roads, expoſure to weather, highwaymen, and damp beds, ſcanty fare and violent hoſtility in moſt places. A means of obviating one of theſe diſagreeables---a damp bed---was provided for, at leaſt in one of the towns in the circuit (namely, *Stroud*), by the inveſtment of 15*s*. 2½*d*. on a warming-pan, at a very early period in Weſleyan hiſtory, as I find recorded in one of the *Worceſter* books.

But now let us return to *John Wesley*. On the 14th of March, 1770, he ſtates: I preached in the new room, which is juſt finiſhed, at *Upton*, and then rode on to *Worceſter*, where I preached in a large, old, awkward place, to a crowded and much affected audience. Afterwards I met the ſociety, of about a hundred members, all of one heart and one mind, ſo lovingly and cloſely united

together that I have ſcarcely ſeen the like in the kingdom. On the 15th I met the ſelect ſociety. How ſwiftly has *God* deepened His work in theſe! I have ſeen very few, either in *Briſtol* or *London*, who are more clear in their experience. The account that all whom I had time to examine gave was Scriptural and rational; and ſuppoſe they ſpeak truly, they are witneſſes of the perfection which I preach; yet that they may fall therefrom I know, but that they *muſt* I utterly deny."

The "large, old, awkward place" mentioned above was probably a room in the Butts, which was one of the obſcure and concealed ſituations at that time coveted by diſſenters, as deſirable to avoid the attacks of rude mobs; but at length, in the year 1772, a ſmall chapel was erected on the eaſt ſide of New Street, near the end of the Garden Market (oppoſite the narrow paſſage leading to the Shambles). This was opened by Mr. *Wesley* on the 11th of March in that year. His own account of that occurrence is as follows:

"In the evening I preached in the new chapel at *Worceſter;* it was thoroughly filled. For a time the work of *God* was hindered here by a riotous mob, but the mayor cut them ſhort, and ever ſince we have been in perfect peace."

The mayor alluded to was probably Mr. *William Davis*. On the corporation records that

gentleman's name is attached to the year 1771, but the cuſtom ſeems to have been to connect the names of the mayors with the year in which they were elected, conſequently, if Mr. *Davis* was elected in 1771, he would remain in office till the Auguſt of 1772, the month of Auguſt being the period when the old corporation elected their officers.

On his next ſpring viſit to *Worceſter*, *John Wesley* inquired concerning "the intelligence ſent Mr. *Hill*, from *Worceſter*, of the ſhocking behaviour of ſome that profeſſed to be perfect. It was ſuppoſed that intelligence came from Mr. *Skinner*,---a dear lover of me and all connected with me. The truth is, one of the ſociety, after having left it, behaved extremely ill, but none who profeſſed to love *God* with all their heart have done anything contrary to that profeſſion."

On March 17, 1774, he finds the ſociety in *Worceſter* "walking in love, and not moved by all the efforts of thoſe who would fain teach them another Goſpel. I was much comforted by their ſteadfaſtneſs and ſimplicity. Thus let them ſilence the ignorance of fooliſh men."

At that time *Wesley* gave *Worceſter* the character of "continuing to be one of the livelieſt places in *England*," which I think may ſtill be aſſerted of it as regards public entertainments, muſic, and ſight-ſeeing of all kinds. On the

14th of March, 1775, Mr. *Wesley* came from *Tewkesbury* to *Worcester*, to preach in the evening.

"Here also (he says) the flame is gradually increasing. While I was here there was a very extraordinary trial at the assizes: A boy being beaten by his master, and wandering about till he was half starved, was then allowed to lie in the hayloft of an inn. In the night he stole into a room where two gentlemen lay (probably not very sober), and without awaking them picked the money out of both their pockets, though their breeches lay under their heads. In the morning, having confessed the fact, he was committed to gaol. He made no defence, so one of the counsel rose up and said, 'My Lord, as there is none to plead for this poor boy I will do it myself.' He did so, and then added, 'My Lord, it may be this bad boy may make a good man; and I humbly conceive it may be best to send him back to his master. I will give him a guinea towards his expenses.' 'And I will give him another,' said the Judge, which he did, with a mild and serious reproof; so he was sent back full of good resolutions."

When Mr. *Wesley* next visited *Worcester*, in March, 1776, for his annual circuits were then pretty regularly assigned, on the 21st he says---

"I was much refreshed among these loving people, especially by the select society, the far greater part of whom could still witness that *God* had saved them from inward as well as outward

ſin. On the 23rd I preached in the Town Hall, *Eveſham*, to a congregation of a very different kind. Few of them, I doubt, came from any other motive than to gratify their curioſity; however, they were deeply attentive, ſo that ſome of them, I truſt, went away a little wiſer than they came."

A few days after this he preached at *Dudley*, "in the midſt of Antinomians and backſliders."

Mr. *Wesley*, in the following year, ſent his chaiſe from *Tewkeſbury* to *Worceſter*, while he himſelf took horſe to *Bengeworth*, where the church was tolerably filled. On the 6th he rode to *Worceſter*, and on the 9th he ſays---

"I went through a delightful vale to *Malvern* hills, lying on the ſide of a high mountain, and commanding one of the fineſt proſpects in the world---the whole vale of *Eveſham*. Hitherto the roads were remarkably good, but they grew worſe and worſe till we came to *Monmouth*."

His next entry is as follows:

"March 17, 1779. Preached at *Tewkeſbury* about noon, and at *Worceſter* in the evening. Upon inquiry I found there had been no morning preaching ſince the conference, ſo the people were of courſe weak and faint. At noon I preached in *Bewdley*, in an open ſpace at the head of the town, to a very numerous and quiet congregation. Here Mrs. *C*—— informed me 'This day twelve month I found peace with

God, and the ſame day my ſon, till then utterly thoughtleſs, was convinced of ſin. Some time after he died, rejoicing in *God* and praiſing Him with his lateſt breath.'"

At *Wesley's* next viſit to *Bewdley*, while preaching there, a man came beating a drum, but a gentleman of the town ſoon ſilenced him. In March, 1780, he "preached to a very ſerious congregation at *Worceſter;*" and in the following year he ſays---

"I preached at *Worceſter* and *Bewdley*, and on the 23rd at *Bengeworth* church, and had ſome converſation with that humble man, Mr. *B*——."

In April of the ſame year he was going to *Ireland*, but a ſtorm prevented it, and thinking it was not the will of *God* he ſhould go, he determined to proceed to *Wales* by way of *Worceſter* and *Shrewſbury:*

"On Saturday, the 21ſt, I was at *Worceſter*, and found one of our preachers, *Joſeph Cole*, there, but unable to preach through his ague, ſo that I could not have come more opportunely. On the 22nd I preached at ſeven in our own room. At three the ſervice began at St. *Andrew's*. As no notice had been given of my preaching there, only as we walked along the ſtreet, it was ſuppoſed the congregation would be ſmall, but it was far otherwiſe: high and low, rich and poor, flocked together from all parts of

the city; and truly *God* ſpake in His word, ſo that I believe moſt of them were almoſt perſuaded to be Chriſtians. Were it only for this hour alone the pains of coming to *Worceſter* would have been well beſtowed."

On May 15th, of the ſame year, he was again at *Worceſter*, after paſſing through miſerable roads, and on the 16th preached to a large meeting at *Kidderminſter*. In that town he ſometimes ſpent an hour with "that good man, Mr. *Fawcett*." In the following entry for the year 1782 is another indication of *John Wesley's* bias for the ſupernatural:

"March 20. From *Tewkeſbury* to *Worceſter*. On the 22nd, about two in the morning, we had ſuch a ſtorm as I never remember. Before it began our chamber door clattered to and fro exceedingly---ſo it ſounded to us, although in fact it did not move at all! I then diſtinctly heard the door open; and having a light, roſe and went to it, but it was faſt ſhut; meanwhile the window was wide open; I ſhut it, and went to ſleep again. So deep a ſnow fell in the night that we were afraid the roads would be impaſſable; however we ſet out in the afternoon and made ſhift to get to *Kidderminſter*."

In March, 1783, he was taken with a fever, and ſent on a Mr. *Collins* to ſupply his place at *Worceſter*, but on the 21ſt he ſays---

"I took chaiſe and overtook him at *Worceſter*, who had ſupplied all my appointments, and with a remarkable bleſſing to the people; but being much exhauſted, I found reſt was ſweet. On the 22nd, in the morning, I gave a ſhort exhortation, and then went on to *Birmingham*."

Mr. *Wesley*, in Auguſt of the ſame year, went from *Glouceſter* again to *Worceſter*, "where many young people are juſt ſetting out in the ways of *God*. I joined fifteen of them, this afternoon, to the ſociety, all of them, I believe, athirſt for ſalvation."

The incumbent of St. *Andrew's* church, in this city (the Rev. *W. Wormington*) ſeems to have been highly favourable to the Weſleyan movement, the founder of which frequently preached in that church; he did ſo twice in the year 1784, there being on the firſt occaſion a crowded congregation; "the vicar read prayers, and afterwards told me I ſhould be welcome to the uſe of his church whenever I came to *Worceſter;*" and in the following Auguſt, when he preached from St. *Andrew's* pulpit, he "was agreeably ſurpriſed to find the congregation deeply attentive while he applied the ſtory of *Dives* and *Lazarus*." Many of the diſſenters likewiſe received him gladly and without jealouſy, for I find that on the occaſion of his viſit here in March, 1785, he "breakfaſted at Mrs. *Price's*, a Quaker who keeps a boarding

ſchool. I was much pleaſed with her children, ſo elegantly plain in their behaviour as well as apparel. I was led---I know not how---to ſpeak to them largely, then to pray, and we were all much comforted. The ſociety is in great peace, and ſtriving together for the hope of the Goſpel. I have not ſeen greater earneſtneſs and ſimplicity in any ſociety ſince we left *London*."

On his annual ſpring viſit to *Worceſter*, in 1786, he had to puſh through the ſnow to this city, and then on to *Bewdley*, concerning which town he ſays:

"Prejudice is here now vaniſhed away. The life of Mr. *Clark* turned the tide, and much more his glorious death. I preached about noon, and at *Worceſter* in the evening, where we had an uncommon bleſſing while I was enforcing 'Thou ſhalt have no other *Gods* before me!"

In this year *John Wesley* invited, among others, *John Edmondſon* of *Keighley*, in the Weſt Riding of *Yorkſhire*, to be an itinerant preacher when at the age of only nineteen; he accepted the invitation and afterwards became paſtor of the Weſleyans at *Worceſter*, and about the year 1815 was made ſecretary to the Foreign Miſſions of the ſociety. He was the author of *A Conciſe Syſtem of Self-government in the Great Affairs of Life and Godlineſs*.

Wesley, it is evident from his diary, was partial

to *Worceſter*, and entertained a moſt affectionate regard for his ſociety here. In the evening of the 22nd of March, 1787, he came on from *Tewkeſbury* to what he calls "our lovely and loving people of *Worceſter*---plain old genuine Methodiſts; from thence next day to *Stourport*, a ſmall, new-built village," where he ſpeaks of Mr. *Heath*, "a middle-aged clergyman, and his wife and two daughters, whose tempers and manners, so winning ſoft, so amiably mild, will do him honour wherever they come." Next year Mr. *Wesley* complains of the chapel at *Worceſter* as being much too ſmall for the increaſing congregation. "The Methodiſts here (says he) have by well-doing utterly put to ſilence the ignorance of fooliſh men, ſo that they are now abundantly more in danger by honour than by dishonour."

I find by the *Worceſter* Weſleyans' books that *Wesley* muſt have had ſome ground for his complaint of want of room, as in that ſame year (1788) the number of members alone in this city amounted to 209 (exactly the ſame number as in 1860!), beſides large numbers of caſual attendants. As this is the earlieſt liſt of members given, and as many of their deſcendants may yet be living who would feel an intereſt in the perpetuation of their names, they are here appended. In the book, marks are ſet againſt

the names, indicating thoſe who were "believers," or "ſeekers," or "doubtful," married, or otherwiſe:

Mary Clark, Tybridge
Miriam Baldwin, Mount
Sar. Lee, Roſemare (? Loweſmoor)
Han. Hyde, Trinity
Mary Day, Broad Street
Eliz. Smith, ditto
Rebec. Willmot, Friar's Alley
Sof. Edwards, do.
Suſan Lewis, Sidbury
Han. Wharton, Church St.
Eliz. Tyler, Friar St.
Ann Chillingworth, do.
Eſther Day, Broad St.
Ann Dalby, Foregate
Mary Bennet, Melchiſedec (!) (? Mealcheapen St.)
Suſan Knapp, Roſemare
Mary Day, Broad St.
Mary Scott, Corn Market
Charlotte George, Broad St.
Mary Holdbrook, Leech St.
E. Langdon, Cooken St.
Martha Smith, Friar St.
Eliz. Dark, Cooken St.
Mary Wilkins, Roſemer
Eliz. Giles, do.
Cath. Hayes, Fiſh St.
Eliz. Hayes
Em. Bryan, Friar St.
Phebe Nourſe, do.
Ann Bibb, Cooken St.
Pen. Slade, Church St.
Mary May, Silver St.
Mart. Edwards, Roſmere
Mary Garner, Leech St.
Ann Mills, Goſe Lane
Suſan Morton, Roſmere
Ann Carlton, Corn Market
Ann Hill, Broad St.
Bridgt. Criſp, Cooken St.
Ann Lewis, Sidbury
Mary Maccland, Church St.
Sus. Spence, Cooken St.
Thos. Lewis, Roſmer
Geo. Knap, do.
Mary Coton
Dorothy Smith, Sidbury
Thos. Smallmann, Mount

Reb. Meredith, College Yard
Iſabel King, Fiſh St.
Sar. Williams, High St.
Eſther Hopkins, Turkey St.
Sar. Pritchard, Broad St.
Sar. Ticket, Cain St. (Quay St.)
Wm. Hathaway, Leech St.
Ann Blackmore, Taylor's Lane
Eliz. Norris, Burford St. (Birdport ?)
Eliz. Lee, Pike Corner (?)
Jos. Fowler, Burford St.
Geo. King, Fiſh St.
Eliz. Rogers, Cooken St.
Eliz. Yap, Leech St.
John Vaughn, Newport St.
Mary Vaughn
Ann Carr, Leech St.
H. May, Newport St.
Rebec. Lewis, Leech St.
Thos. Warton, Church St.
Mary Goodall, Friar's Alley
Sar. Baylis, do.
Mary Hughes, Sidbury
Han. Stinton
Sar. Barnsley, Dowley (Dolday ?)
Han. Bachelor
Mary Iſles, Leech St.
A. Meſſlin, Pump St.
Robt. Davis
Sar. Mann, Newport St.
Tho. Thacker, High St.
Jo. Reynolds, Sidbury
John Kingſton, Clap Gate (leader)
Mary Savage, Clains
Ann Lewis, Pump St.
Thos. Wine, Loſemear
Eliz. Holloway, Sidbury
Thos. Nourſe, Fryar Alley
John Tyler, Fryer St.
Han. Bryan, Turkey
Sar. Randle, Doldy
Eliz. Bowen, do.
Geo. Tyler, Sidbury
Richd. Bryan, Doldey
Sarah Day, do.
Jos. Aſhton, Cripplegate
Mary Mathews, Hare's Lane
Enoch Pearce, Doldey
Mary Jones, Sidbury
Sar. Yeates, Fryars Alley
Sus. Smith, Silver St.
Jane Smith, do.

Eliz. Wells, do.
Jane Draper, Sidbury
Mary Thacker, High St.
Thos. Evans, Silver St.
Jos. Bowen, Doldey
Geo. Smallman, Sidbury
Ann Eaton, Cane St.
Eliz. Renolds, Sidbury
Wm. Day, Broad St. (leader)
Thos. Tyler, Sidbury
Jane Smallman, Sidbury
Mary Lamb
Mrs. *Smallman*, Mount
James Stone, do.
Eliz. Stone
Sarah Lewis, Clap Gate
Sarah Naſh
Ann Newton
Edmund Lewtyn, Fiſh St.
John Lee, Roſemear (leader)
Cath. Mathews, Birport
Lucia Bowers, Broad St.
Jane Bowen, Bowk-lane (?)
Ann Phillips, Sidbury
Jos. Chillingworth, Friar St.
Ann Evans, Newport St.
Ann Young, Silver St.
Ann Miller, Loeſmear
M. Lawrence, Birpurt
John Corns, Fryer St.
Ann Clark
Sar. Davis, Dolday
Ann Horn, Shambles
Han. Haſſall, Loeſmore
Mary Spooner, Leech St.
Sus. Perkins, Loeſmear
John Knap, do. (leader)
Ann Knap
Mary Bell, Croſs
Wm. Locker
Jos. Giles, Loeſmear
Suſan Holmes
Thos. Davis, St. John's
Sar. Davis
Mary Southorn
Eliz. Pew, Loeſmear
Eliz. Lovekin
Wm. Corns
Phe. Bullock, Loeſmear
Eliz. Knapp, do.
James Evans, Newport St. (leader)
Jos. Jones, St. Clement's
Dinah Lamb, Silver St.
Sarah Bradley, Friar St.
Sarah Netherwood, Bank St.
Sarah Jacox, Quay St.
Joseph Jacox, Quay
Henry Whitmay, Sidbury

John Wheeler, High St.
Robt. Brown, Shambles
Jas. Evans, Newport St.
Eſther Chillingworth, Friar St.
Eliz. Mantle, do.
Marg. Price, Sidbury
John Baylis, do.
John Yates, Friar's Alley
Eliz. Jones, Turkey St.
Sarah Atkins, Friar St.
Mary Francis, Cooken St.
Wm. Read, Croſs
Wm. Brutt, Silver St.
John Lee, Crump's Buildings
Thos. Mill, Gooſe Lane
Ann Adley, Town Ditch
Geo. Lee, Pump St.
Thos. Williams, Powick
Sarah Williams
Thos. Bourn, Friar St.
Thos. Smith, Silver St.
John Wells, do.
John Hughes, Roſemear (leader)
Jane Buſby, Bank St.
Ann Fell, Gooſe Lane
Wm. Drinkwater, College Yard
Wm. Day, Broad St.
Fran. Haſwell, Roſemear
Thos. Adams, do.
Mary Adams, do.
Mary Badger, Shambles
Wm. Hayward
Margt. Perrins, St. Peter's
Margt. Severn, All Saints
Wm. Hobb, Clap Gate
Wm. Giles, Silver St.
A. Edmunds, Loeſmear
Eliz. Davis, do.
Wm. Barton
Harriet Harper, Bank Street
John M'Cloud, drum-major
Wm. Foxwell, College Yard
Eliz. Foxwell
Ann Brown, All Saints
Wm. Gardiner
Ann Poppleton
Eliz. Fuller
Eliz. Holdridge
Ann Holt
John James
Han. Barnſley
Math. Wilkins

The majority of theſe members were engaged in the glove trade (then flouriſhing in *Worceſter*), others were ſervants, cordwainers, milk ſellers, water carriers, bricklayers, hatters, coopers, dyers, patten makers, ſmiths, watermen, one or two china workers, a milliner or two, and two or three of the females are deſcribed as "gents." (!) The preacher's houſe-rent at that time amounted to nine guineas per annum, and rates and taxes about two guineas more.

On the 20th of March, 1788, *Wesley* went to *Stourport*, where

"Twenty years ago (says he) there was but one houſe; now there are two or three ſtreets; and as the trade ſwiftly increaſes it will probably grow into a conſiderable town. A few years ſince, Mr. *Cowell* largely contributed to the building of a preaching houſe here, in which both Calviniſts and Arminians might preach; but when it was finiſhed the Arminian preachers were totally excluded. Rather than go to law, Mr. *Cowell* built another houſe, both larger and more convenient. I preached there, at noon, to a large congregation, but to a much larger in the evening. Several clergymen were preſent, and were as attentive as any of the people. Probably there will be a deep work of *God* at this place. On the 22nd breakfaſted at Mr. *Lister's*, in *Kidderminster*, with a few very ſerious and pious friends."

In the following year he reiterates his complaint of want of room at *Worceſter*, and in 1790 he ſays:

"March 17, went to *Worceſter* in the afternoon, and found much comfort among a well eſtabliſhed people. They have no jars now, but all hold the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

In that year I find the firſt liſt of claſs leaders, whoſe names were --- Siſter *Clarke*, Brothers *Kingſton*, *Evans*, *Lewis*, *Lee*, *Day*, *King*, *Hughes*, and the preacher alſo had a claſs, making nine claſſes in all. On the 18th of March, 1790, *Wesley* went on to *Stourport*, "which (he ſays) was twice as large as two years ago. They seemed to be ſerious and attentive while I was ſpeaking, but the moment I ceaſed, fourſcore or a hundred of them began talking all at once. I do not remember ever to have been preſent at ſuch a ſcene before. This muſt be amended, otherwiſe (if I ſhould live) I will ſee *Stourport* no more."

There was ſomething prophetic in his remark with regard to *Stourport*, for he ſaw that town no more. His work was now drawing to a cloſe; his long, active, and beneficial life had been ſpent in the ſervice of his Maker, to whom he was now about to reſign it. *Wesley's* habits of life and

happy diſpoſition had tended greatly to lengthen his days. When in his ſeventy-ſecond year he congratulated himſelf on his ſtrength being the ſame as it was thirty years previouſly, his ſight conſiderably better, and his nerves firmer. He had none of the infirmities of old age, and had loſt ſeveral from which he had ſuffered in his youth. The chief cauſe of this was temperance and early riſing. For fifty years he roſe at four in the morning and preached about five o'clock; nor did he travel leſs than 4,500 miles a year. His diary ceaſes in October, 1790, and he died in March of the following year, at the age of nearly eighty-eight. He had been ſixty-five years in the miniſtry, and had lived to ſee the enliſtment into his ranks of 300 itinerant and 1000 local preachers, with 80,000 members in his ſocieties. His deſcription of Methodiſm was as follows:

"There is no other religious ſociety under heaven which requires nothing of men in order to their admiſſion into it but a deſire to ſave their ſouls. Look all around you! You cannot be admitted into the Church, or ſociety of the Presbyterians, Anabaptiſts, Quakers, or any others, unleſs you hold the ſame opinions with them, and adhere to the ſame mode of worſhip. The Methodiſts alone do not inſiſt on your holding this or that opinion, but they think and let think. Neither do they impoſe any particular mode of worſhip, but you may continue to worſhip in

your former manner, be it what it may. Now I do not know any other religious ſociety, either ancient or modern, wherein ſuch liberty of conſcience is now allowed, or has been allowed ſince the age of the apoſtles. Here is our glorying, and a glorying peculiar to us. What ſociety ſhares it with us?"

When Lord *Lyttelton* publiſhed his *Dialogues of the Dead*, in which his lordſhip ſays---"*Martin* has ſpawned a ſtrange brood of fellows, called Methodiſts, Moravians, Hutchinſonians, who are madder than *Jack* was in his worſt days," *Wesley* remarks---"His lordſhip can know nothing of Methodiſm, and has taken no pains to aſcertain. Since the writing of this, Lord *Lyttelton* is no more; he is mingled with common duſt; but as his book ſurvives, there ſtill needs an anſwer to the unjuſt reflections contained therein." Both peer and preacher are now gone to their long account, and the *Dialogues of the Dead* is only ſeen in antique catalogues. So paſſeth away all things human!

John Wesley did not live to ſee his wiſhes carried into effect with regard to his favourite city of *Worceſter*---namely, by the enlargement of the chapel; but in about four years after his death, the congregation having ſtill continued to increaſe, they purchaſed, in 1795, the old chapel belonging to a branch of the Independents (ſee

p. 122) in Pump Street. This building was taken down and a new one erected in 1796; but the ſociety ſtill increaſing in numbers, more ground was obtained, and the preſent ſpacious chapel was opened on the 8th of Auguſt, 1813. This building coſt the immenſe ſum of 6,560*l.* The newſpaper account of that opening, by the celebrated Dr. *Adam Clarke*, is as follows:

"The new Methodiſt chapel in this city was opened for divine ſervice on Sunday, the 8th, in the following manner. The miniſter appointed to officiate entered the chapel at half-paſt ten o'clock, when a hymn of praiſe and benediction was ſung by the choir. The ſixth chapter of II Corinthians was then read, and the conſecration hymn being ſung by the congregation, the dedicatory prayer for the Divine bleſſing was offered up by the Rev. *James Byron*, miniſter of the chapel. The Rev. Dr. *Adam Clarke* preached in the morning and afternoon, and gave a clear and maſterly ſtatement of the doctrines as taught and believed by the people called Methodiſts. The Rev. *John Stevens*, from *London*, preached in the evening, and the whole collections amounted to 412*l.* 1*s.* 4*d.*, being the largeſt ſum ever produced by a ſimilar occaſion."

The old chapel in New Street was afterwards uſed for ſome years as a reſidence for the miniſters of Pump Street chapel, but the houſe is now divided in two, has undergone other alterations, and is occupied as ſhops.

A ſmall chapel was erected in *Loweſmoor* in the year 1823, by the Weſleyans, chiefly for the uſe of the boatmen on the canal and the men employed in the wharf. The late Miſs *Knapp* (previouſly mentioned) was a great promoter of that undertaking, but it did not ſucceed, and when the late Mr. *Lake* retired from *Birdport* (Counteſs of *Huntingdon's*) chapel, and formed a ſecond congregation of Huntingdonians, the latter purchaſed the *Loweſmoor* chapel, which was then abandoned by the Weſleyans; that was in the year 1836; it is ſtill occupied by the congregation who ſeparated from *Birdport*.

The hiſtory of the *Worceſter* Weſleyans, beyond what has already been ſtated, contains but little that is noteworthy. Their minutes and accounts are of the mereſt routine character, and their proceedings ſeem to have been unchequered except by the occaſional ſeceſſion of members from their ranks to form other congregations, and by the yearly or biennial change of their miniſters. Among the poor their labours have been attended with great reſults, while their efforts in training up the young have been worthy of any body of Chriſtians. The reſident miniſters for 1860-1 are Revs. *J. McOwan* and *E. F. Hardwick*. There are about two hundred children in their *(Worceſter)* ſchools. The debt on their chapel is ſtill large, amounting to 1200*l*, for the liquidation of which a ſpecial effort is being made.

There is a branch congregation of Weſleyans who have a chapel in Boughton Fields, St. *John's;* it is ſerved, I believe, by the miniſters of Pump Street. Moreover there are ſeveral parties of ſeceders from the parent congregation, including the Primitive Methodiſts, or Ranters, who hold their meetings in South Street, Blockhouſe; the Aſſociation Methodiſts in Park Street, who had their new Zion chapel erected in 1845; and---the laſt ſeceſſion from the prolific parent ſtock of Methodiſm---a ſmall congregation of Methodiſt Reformers, meeting at a houſe in Bull Entry.

From the proceedings of the 117th conference, held in *London*, July, 1860, I find that the number of members in the *Worceſter* circuit was 320. This includes *Worceſter* (in which there were 209 members), St. *John's*, *Droitwich*, *Norton*, *Smithen's Green (Leigh)*, *Kempsey*, and *Crowle*. The total number of members in *Great Britain* was 310,311; on trial, 30,892; members in *Ireland*, 22,860; on trial, 1,826. Miniſters in *Great Britain*, 965; on trial, 212; ditto in *Ireland*, 88; on trial, 25. Superintendents in *Great Britain*, 179; in *Ireland*, 27. Increaſe of members during the year---in *Great Britain*, 17,516; in *Ireland*, 3,129. The ſtatiſtics of the body in foreign parts and their miſſions are equally flouriſhing. The miniſters in *England* are aſſiſted in their work by about 14,000 local or lay preachers, who, purſuing their ſecular calling

during the week, preach in the ſmaller chapels on the Sabbath. There are in *England* upwards of 5,000 chapels, which have been erected at a coſt of more than ſix millions of money.

In concluſion it may be ſtated that there is now a conſiderable variety of denominations who collectively are called Methodiſts; 1, the Weſleyan Methodiſts; 2, the Methodiſts of Lady *Huntingdon's* Connexion; 3, the Methodiſts of the New Connexion; 4, the Primitive Methodiſts; 5, the Bible Chriſtians; 6, Proteſtant Methodiſts; 7, Aſſociation Methodiſts; 8, the Inghamites; 9, a body of Reforming Methodiſts, who ſeparated in conſequence of what they conſidered the abſolutiſm of the Conference; and I believe one or two more denominations, including a large and rapidly increaſing body, chiefly in *Wales*, calling themſelves Calviniſtic Methodiſts, who are not included in what is called Lady *Huntingdon's* Connexion. The great founder of Methodiſm, when he eſtabliſhed his hierarchy of the Conference, and declared there was no religion under heaven which gave ſo large a latitude for private opinion as his, ſcarcely contemplated the poſſibility of theſe minute ſub-diviſions in the ranks of his followers, or, if he had, he would have agreed with the judicious *Hooker*, that "thoſe who would over reform all things are like to the man who would never ceaſe to whet his knife till there was no ſteel left to make it uſeful."

Counteſs of Huntingdon's.

"Let not this weak unknowing hand
Preſume thy bolts to throw,
And deal damnation round the land,
On each they judge thy foe."

ELINA, Counteſs of *Huntingdon*, was in many ways a remarkable woman. She was of noble birth, a daughter of *Waſhington*, Earl of *Ferrers;* her preſence likewiſe was noble, her intelligence great, and her addreſs moſt engaging. She lived to the unwonted age of nearly eighty-four, of which, forty-five years ſhe was a widow; and her long life was entirely ſpent in inconceivable induſtry and beneficence. Moreover, in an age of exceſſive laxity of religious diſcipline and corruption of morals, ſhe was not aſhamed of teſtifying to the truth of the Goſpel, and readily abandoned the ſplendours of the Court for the ſelf-denying labours of what may be called a home miſſionary. Through her influence and example the poor deſpiſed Methodiſt preacher

was introduced into the higher circles, and an impetus given to the movement which, humanly speaking, could not have been gained in any other way. Lord *Lyttelton*, and Dr. *Stillingfleet*, Prebendary of *Worcester*, were among her friends; the courtly *Chesterfield*, the Duchess of *Marlborough*, the gay and frivolous *Nash*, and even the infidel *Bolingbroke*, paid her marked and sincere homage, and listened to the preachers whom she patronised and commended. In my previous chapter on Wesleyan Methodism, allusion has been made to the connexion of the Countess with the *Wesleys* and *Whitefield;* to her adoption of the latter as her chaplain, and embracing his Calvinistic views; and the consequent separation of Methodism under three leaderships. My present attempt therefore will be confined to the part which the Countess of *Huntingdon* bore in the great attack on the spiritual atrophy of the Church, and the "dry rot of dulness and indifference" which characterised the last century as well among dissenters as in the Establishment.

It has been said of her ladyship that when she first applied herself to religion she was not a reformed *roué*---a fashionable, used-up, disappointed, death-dreading dowager, who had got on her knees when she could no longer sit up to cards, and had turned her eyes towards Heaven only when they were unable to discover

the ace of ſpades. At the early age of nine years the ſight of a corpſe of her own age impreſſed her young mind with ſerious thoughts, and in after life a ſevere illneſs gave birth to that evangelical zeal and fervour which ſo diſtinguiſhed her. She had, beſides, the advantage of marrying a peer, who, though only a plain, well-behaved man, taking no part in the Methodiſt movement, ſeems to have entertained ſo great a reſpect for her that he never interfered with her ſchemes of Chriſtian uſefulneſs, nor even when her expenſes were great in the way of chapel building, chapel buying, and college founding, did he interpoſe his authority, but at his death he left her the entire management of her children and their fortunes.

"Become her own miſtreſs (ſays Dr. *Gibbon*, in his memoirs of this pious woman) ſhe reſolved to devote herſelf wholly to the ſervice of *Chriſt*, and the ſouls redeemed by His blood. Her zealous heart embraced cordially all whom ſhe eſteemed real Chriſtians, whatever their denomination or opinions might be, but being herſelf in ſentiment more congenial with Mr. *Whitefield* than the Mr. *Wesleys* ſhe favoured thoſe eſpecially who were the miniſters of the Calviniſtic perſuaſion, according to the literal ſenſe of the articles of the Church of *England*. And with the intention of giving them a greater ſcene of uſefulneſs, ſhe opened her houſe in Park Street, *London*, for the preaching of the Goſpel, ſuppoſing that, as a peereſs of the realm,

she had an indisputable right to employ as her family chaplains those ministers of the church whom she patronised. On the week days her kitchen was filled with the poor of the flock, for whom she provided instruction; and on the *Lord's* day the great and noble were invited to spend the evening in her drawing-room, where Mr. *Whitefield*, Mr. *Romaine*, Mr. *Jones*, and other ministers of *Christ*, addressed to them faithfully all the words of this life, and were heard with apparently deep and serious attention."

Nor was this eminent woman only seen and admired in the drawing-room: in the cottages of the poor her visits were esteemed as those of an angel of mercy. Her affection, her boundless charity, with chaste and winning conversation, endeared her to all, and her life and fortune were spent in providing for the spiritual wants of the masses. To accomplish this, the leaders of the great religious movement were compelled to resort to the agency of lay preaching and other irregularities of which the bulk of the Church clergy disapproved; and so the Countess and her friends, in spite of their earnest desire to remain in the ranks of the Establishment, and to warm its dying embers into life, were driven to take refuge under the Toleration Act, registering their places of worship and licensing their preachers as the Act required for dissenters. Thus the Church lost a large army of her most faithful sons. For-

tunately this was an age of State toleration; and although the old ſpirit of perſecution exhibited itſelf in ſociety in a variety of petty ways, yet how different was the condition of our forefathers, eſpecially in the reign of *Charles II*, when the priſons were crowded with nonconformiſts! Happily He by whom kings reign and princes decree juſtice has given us a ſucceſſion of ſovereigns of the houſe of Brunſwick who, to a great extent, have been favourable to religious liberty. Thus *George III*, grandfather of our gracious Queen, on being informed that a bill tending to infringe the liberties of diſſenters would ſhortly be brought into the Houſe of Commons, declared that ſhould it paſs through both Houſes of Parliament he would not give his conſent to it, adding that there ſhould be no perſecution during his reign. Moreover, His Majeſty ſo highly approved of the Counteſs of *Huntingdon's* zeal in ſpreading the Goſpel that he once emphatically remarked, "I wiſh there was a Lady *Huntingdon* in every dioceſe in this kingdom."

Although driven from the boſom of the Eſtabliſhment, the Counteſs ſtill laboured rather to extend its order of ſervices and its doctrines, unfettered by eccleſiaſtical courts, than to eſtabliſh any new ſyſtem of her own; and her admiration of our incomparable liturgy was ſo great that it

was retained, and is, I believe, ſtill uſed in the chapels belonging to this ſection of Methodiſm; at leaſt ſuch is the caſe at *Worceſter*. Undoubtedly, for a juſt conception of the relative poſitions of *God* and man, for ſublimity of language, and a comprehenſive recognition of all the ſinner's wants, the Church liturgy is immeaſurably ſuperior to the vulgar and familiar effuſions ſometimes heard in extemporaneous approaches to the Throne of grace. In the life of the Rev. *Griffith Jones*, the celebrated founder of the *Welſh* circulating charity ſchools, is this note:

"Living amongſt diſſenters, who diſlike forms of prayer, he committed to memory the whole of the baptiſmal and burial ſervices; and as his delivery was very energetic, his friends frequently heard diſſenters admire his addreſſes, which they praiſed as being extempore effuſions unſhackled by the Prayer Book."

As early as the year 1757, Lady *Huntingdon* had engaged a Mr. *Madan* to itinerate, and he paſſed through *Worceſterſhire* and the midland counties, preaching, where permitted to do ſo, in the pariſh churches, and having among his auditors not only church people, but Quakers, Baptiſts, and Independents. The cauſe was foſtered and promoted by the Rev. *Thomas Biddulph*, a church clergyman reſiding at *Henwick Hill*, who opened his houſe morning and evening for prayer,

and the little band of worſhippers who profited by this practice regularly followed the rev. gentleman to *Tibberton* church, where he at that time preached. This was in the year 1767; but it ſeems that about the ſame time a Mr. *Engliſh*, one of Lady *Huntingdon's* ſenior ſtudents from *Trevecca* College, was labouring at *Worceſter*, from whence he was ſubſequently removed by her to *Chicheſter*. When Mr. *Biddulph* left *Worceſter*, and his houſe was no longer at the diſpoſal of the ſociety, they aſſembled in a garret, uſed for dyeing leather, at a Mr. *Skinner's* warehouſe, ſituated in the Town Ditch, now called Sanſome Street---a part of the city which has undergone extenſive modern improvements, the old buildings having long ſince been taken down, and large warehouſes erected on its ſite. In that garret Sir *Richard Hill* and his venerable brother, *Rowland Hill*, frequently preached. On one occaſion the latter was paſſing, with another miniſter, through the ſtreet in which the old building ſtood, when he immediately recogniſed it, and ſaid, in a way peculiar to himſelf, "Why this is the place, is it not, where we uſed to preach, at Mr. *Skinner's?* Yes, in Mr. *Skinner's* garret."

Lady *Huntingdon* herſelf viſited *Worceſter*, in company with ſeveral clergymen, in the year 1769, and in a letter written to a friend her ladyſhip ſpeaks thus of *Worceſter:*

"Where (ſays ſhe) we have full employment in miniſtering to a people not unwilling to hear the Goſpel. The labours of Mr. *Glaſcott*, Mr. *Venn*, and others, have excited a diſpoſition among the inhabitants of this city to attend to the things which belong to their peace; nearly two hundred perſons have been united in a religious ſociety, many of whom have given deciſive proofs of their converſion to *God*, and are encouraging rewards of our diſintereſted labours for our great and gracious Maſter. To ſpread the knowledge of His bleſſed name amongſt thoſe who know not *God* has been my chief deſire for many years, and I think that deſire has ſuffered no diminution, but rather gained ſtrength, ſince I left *Bath*, and my daily prayers and exertions are made with a view to an increaſed ability to afford my fellow ſinners all the bleſſings connected with that unſpeakably precious Goſpel which is the power of *God* unto ſalvation."

The vigorous and well-directed efforts of her ladyſhip, and the powerful preaching of *Shirley*, *Rowland Hill*, and others, excited an intereſt in *Worceſter* ſo lively and extenſive that the Counteſs was ſolicited by a conſiderable number of perſons to erect a chapel for the preaching of that Goſpel which they could not then hear within the walls of their pariſh churches. To this requeſt ſhe readily yielded, and the neceſſary ſteps for that purpoſe were taken without delay.

"Thus have I been called (obſerves ſhe) to erect another chapel for the ſervice of the living *God*. May He deign to bleſs it, and cauſe the cloud of His gracious preſence to reſt upon it. It is His work: I can only plant: His Holy Spirit will water and give the increaſe. I leave all events with Him. Great difficulties and diſcouragements attend every effort to ſpread the knowledge of divine truth, but thoſe who labour with me have been taught to feel that it is not by might nor by power, and that nothing ſhort of the vital energy of the Holy Ghoſt can give ſucceſs to the preaching of the Goſpel."

This chapel was erected in *Birdport*, in 1771, partly by ſubſcription, and the intereſt of the remaining debt was paid by Lady *Huntingdon* till the congregation was enabled to liquidate the whole. The building was opened in 1773, by the Hon. and Rev. *Walter Shirley* (a relative of her ladyſhip) and the Rev. Mr. *Wilks*.

"It would afford you unſpeakable pleaſure (writes the Counteſs to a friend) to hear of the amazing ſucceſs which hath attended our labours at *Worceſter*. The chapel was crowded, and multitudes went away unable to gain admittance. We had a glorious diſplay of the power and grace of our adorable *Immanuel*, and dear Mr. *Shirley* was enabled to teſtify of the ſalvation which is provided for the guilty and the loſt, with great boldneſs and fidelity. I know not which way to turn, I have ſo many applications from the people

in various parts of the kingdom for more labourers. Pray mightily to the *Lord* to ſend forth a hoſt of holy devoted ſouls, to proclaim the glory of His righteouſneſs boldly to an unbelieving and degenerate world. I feel that if I had a thouſand worlds and a thouſand lives, through grace aſſiſting, that dear Lamb of *God*---my beſt, my eternal, my only friend---ſhould have all devoted to His ſervice and glory. O pray for me, that I may be more extenſively uſeful in promoting the extenſion of His kingdom upon earth, for it is matter of unceaſing grief that I have done ſo little for ſo good a maſter."

For ſeveral years the *Worceſter* chapel continued to be ſupplied by ſtudents from *Trevecca* (a college eſtabliſhed by her ladyſhip). Mr. *Glazebrook*, the firſt ſtudent propoſed in that ſeminary, was ordained a prieſt by *Hurd*, Biſhop of *Worceſter*, in 1777, and ſo great was the impreſſion made on the young man by that ſolemn rite as to draw from him the following remarks:

"Never can I forget the ſerious manner with which the worthy Biſhop of *Worceſter* addreſſed himſelf to the candidates when I was ordained prieſt: his warnings and exhortations were ſuch as well became a governor of the Church, and were truly expreſſive of that anxious concern which every godly prelate muſt feel when ſending forth perſons to undertake the paſtoral office."

Mr. *Glazebrook* ſerved ſeveral curacies. Among the ſtudents whoſe names I find in the ſupplies for *Worceſter* chapel were *Wilks*, *Green*, *Hayes*, *Engliſh*, *Jones*, *Merror*, *Winkworth*, *Glaſcott*, *Newell*, and *Trench*.

In 1771---the year when *Worceſter* chapel was built---Lady *Huntingdon* and *Wesley* formally ſeparated, after a controverſy on the ſubject of faith and works, predeſtination and Chriſtian perfectibility, which laſted many years, and was marked on both ſides by a conſiderable degree of acrimony and language unbecoming to profeſſors of religion. *Rowland Hill* likewiſe offended her ladyſhip by ſome injudicious article, and was excluded from her chapels, when his friends and followers erected one for him, and *Rowland* continued to be loved and honoured by *Whitefield* and the Weſleyans, even Lady *Huntingdon* aſſiſting with a liberal contribution the erection of his Surrey chapel. But greater troubles than the ſeparation from theſe good men awaited her ladyſhip. In 1777, the Rev. *W. Sellon*, of St. *James's*, Clerkenwell, inſtituted a ſuit in the Conſiſtorial Court againſt two of Lady *Huntingdon's* miniſters, for carrying on Divine ſervice againſt his conſent in his pariſh; and although as a peereſs her ladyſhip thought ſhe had the right of appointing chaplains and carrying on divine ſervice, the ſuit went againſt her, and

her congregation would have been diſperſed had ſhe not then, but moſt reluctantly, decided to leave the Eſtabliſhment and to become a diſſenter, under the protection of the Toleration Act. The Revs. Meſſrs. *Wills* and *Taylor* agreed to ſecede with her and take the oaths of allegiance as diſſenting miniſters, taking care, however, to retain ſuch parts of the Church ſervice as are allowed to diſſenters by the canons. Then they carried on their worſhip in uninterrupted peace and harmony. Their vindication for this ſtep---addreſſed to the Archbiſhops and Biſhops ---ſtates, among other things---

"And this we deſire to do not from a factious or ſchiſmatical ſpirit---not from a deſire to propagate hereſies in the church of *God*, nor from any ſiniſter or lucrative motives whatever, but from a ſimple view of glorifying *God*, of preaching the Goſpel, and of being uſeful to our fellow-creatures in that way which is moſt agreeable to our own conſciences, and which we humbly conceive to be moſt calculated for the general good of thoſe many thouſands that attend the miniſtry of ourſelves and of thoſe connected with us. And as great indulgences have lately been given by the legiſlature to religious perſons of various denominations to worſhip *God* in the way moſt agreeable to their conſciences, we flatter ourſelves our conduct will give the leſs offence in this land of liberty to our ſuperiors in Church and State, eſpecially as we determined to maintain the

doctrine of the former, and in all things deſire to acquit ourſelves as faithful and dutiful ſubjects belonging to the latter."

Lady *Huntingdon's* own obſervations on her ſeparation from the Church were theſe:

"I am to be caſt out of the Church now, only for what I have been doing theſe forty years, ſpeaking and living for *Chriſt*. And if the days of my captivity are now to be accompliſhed, thoſe that turn me out and ſo ſet me at liberty may ſoon feel what it is, by ſore diſtreſs themſelves, for theſe hard ſervices they have cauſed me. Bleſſed be the *Lord*, I have not one care relative to this event, but to be found exactly faithful to *God* and man through all."

Conſcientious clergymen of the Church were at that time painfully circumſtanced: multitudes were periſhing in ignorance, yet the regulations of the Eſtabliſhment forbad them to ſtep acroſs the boundaries of a pariſh even to ſave a ſoul from death; many however preferred to do ſo and riſk the conſequences. The venerable *Berridge*, when interrogated by his dioceſan for preaching out of his pariſh, ſaid---"Why, my lord, I ſee many perſons playing at bowls and going a hunting out of their own pariſhes, yet they meet with no reproof: why ſhould I be blamed more than they?" In ſome pariſhes in the north, the local clergy, on hearing of a propoſed incurſion of the

Methodifts, iffued handbills, inviting all the parifhioners to the market-place in defence of the Church, and giving them a pint of beer each, mobbed the poor preachers and treated them with great brutality. At *Norwich*, fome of the minifters were dragged by the hair of the head through the city, while in other places the eftablifhed clergy headed their parifhioners, with bludgeons, and beat the Methodifts out of their boundaries, ducked them in the river, or otherwife maltreated them.

In a note appended to the Rev. *W. H. Havergal's* publifhed fermon on the death of the Rev. *John Davies*, late rector of St. Clement's in this city, it is faid to be a fact, of which witneffes are ftill living, that the eftimable father of an alderman in *Worcefter* was hunted like a wild beaft with all forts of miffiles along High Street, becaufe he had befriended a preacher of Lady *Huntingdon's* connection. The perfon alluded to I believe was the late Mr. *James Allies*, who was a truftee of *Birdport* chapel; and he and his wife were often groffly infulted while going to and returning from that place of worfhip. The name of "Methodift" was at that time attached to any one who manifefted a ferious fenfe of religion, and this nickname was frequently followed by the moft opprobrious treatment. How different to this was the conduct of the venerable

Dr. *Hurd*, then biſhop of *Worceſter*, who, notwithſtanding his oppoſition to the general claims of diſſenters, refuſed to be guided by the ſpirit of the age in this reſpect. Being in the habit of preaching frequently (we are told in the life of Lady *Huntingdon*), the biſhop had obſerved a poor man remarkably attentive, and made him ſome little preſents. After a while he miſſed his humble auditor, and, meeting him, ſaid, "*John*, how is it that I do not ſee you in the aiſle as uſual?" *John* with ſome heſitation replied, "My lord, I hope you will not be offended, and I will tell you the truth. I went the other day to hear the Methodiſts, and I underſtand their plain words ſo much better that I have attended them ever ſince." The biſhop put his hand into his pocket, and gave him a guinea, with words to this effect: "*God* bleſs you; go where you can receive the greateſt profit to your ſoul."

On the 3rd of March, 1790, a plan was drawn up by order of the Counteſs and her aſſociation for the purpoſe of perpetuating the connection after her deceaſe. By that plan, *Worceſter*, *Eveſham*, and *Kidderminſter*, formed the twelfth diſtrict; but the plan was abandoned, and to this cauſe it may be attributed that this ſect has not become ſo extenſive and flouriſhing as it might have been. Her ladyſhip's will was made in the ſame year (1790), leaving her chapels, &c., to certain perſons

named, the law of mortmain preventing the ſaid property being left oſtenſibly for religious purpoſes, unleſs the bequeſt was made a year before the deceaſe. Lady *Huntingdon* died in 1791, in her eighty-fourth year, after having ſpent her long life and her whole income---more than 2,000*l* a year---in promoting the ſpread of the Goſpel.

The congregation at *Birdport* chapel having greatly increaſed, it was determined, in 1804, that the chapel ſhould be taken down and a more capacious one erected on its ſite, capable of containing about one thouſand perſons. The new building was opened by the Rev. *John Brown*, afterwards of *Cheltenham*. In the year 1806, the Rev. *Edward Lake* viſited *Worceſter*, and two years afterwards, at the requeſt of this congregation, he became their reſident paſtor. Under his miniſtry the chapel became ſo thronged as to render it neceſſary to make a conſiderable enlargement, and on the completion of this alteration, in 1815, the building, which was then adapted to hold two thouſand perſons, was reopened by the Rev. *Rowland Hill*.

Poor *Rowland Hill!* At that time he had completed the uſually allotted threeſcore years and ten of human life, but as though gifted with a prophetic foreſight of a yet long remaining period of uſefulneſs he diſliked any reflection

paſſed by other perſons on his age. Walking through one of the ſtreets of *Briſtol*, towards the Tabernacle, where he frequently preached, he heard his name mentioned by two ladies, one of whom ſaid, "Poor *Rowland Hill!* 'tis time he gave up preaching." "Yes," ſaid the other, "he grows feeble and ineffective---ſome friend ought to tell him in pity to ſtop." The obſervations were not true, nor were they agreeable to *Rowland;* the exclamation was rankling in the old man's mind as he entered the pulpit to preach, and his feelings were not at all improved by ſeeing the two ladies in front of the gallery before him. He gave out his text and began, "As I was coming along to preach here this evening I overheard two ladies before me, when one ſaid to the other, 'Poor *Rowland Hill!* it is time he gave up,' and the other anſwered, 'He grows old and infirm.' Now, I tell theſe ſame ladies, whom I ſee there in front of the gallery (and he pointed with his finger to the place where they ſat), that poor old *Rowland Hill* (and he bitterly emphaſized the words) will not give up while he has any energy or power left in his poor body to denounce ſin and declare the unſearchable riches of *Chriſt.*" The effect was as electrifying as the act was cruel and uncalled for.

There is no record of Mr. *Hill's* ſermon at *Worceſter*, or that it was diſtinguiſhed by any of

thoſe peculiarities for which he was famous in his younger days; but I am told that while ſurveying the enlarged chapel in *Birdport*, in company with the late Mr. *James Allies*, he turned round and ſaid, in his own peculiar way, "Well, brother *Allies*, it is the beſt patch I have ever ſeen." Some years ſubſequently, when attending a miſſionary meeting in this city, *Rowland Hill* was loudly cheered on riſing to addreſs the audience, whereupon he ſaid, with much ſerioufneſs, "I wiſh you wouldn't make that noiſe, it ſounds ſo much like a play-houſe."

It is a curious feature in the geography of *Birdport* chapel, that one half is located in the pariſh of St. *Andrew* and the other half in St. *Swithin's;* and about the year 1815, attempts were made here, as well as in *London* and other parts of the country, to aſſeſs diſſenting places of worſhip to the poor rate. The truſtees of *Birdport* chapel reſiſted the claim, which was a very heavy one, until the pariſh officers of St. *Andrew's* ſeized their lamps and were about to remove the organ, whereupon the rate was paid under proteſt, and the truſtees ſought the advice of *Rowland Hill*, who was then engaged in doing battle for his own Surrey chapel and others. His anſwer was characteriſtic:

"We have baffled all their attempts (ſays he) at Surrey chapel, without making a ſingle compromiſe or paying a penny. We let no pews; all that is given to ſupport the place is by voluntary ſubſcription; no one is allowed to know what that amount is but the truſtees. Voluntary donations are not taxable; or if they were, our enemies cannot find out what is the amount. At preſent my advice is that you leave nothing in the chapel worth their ſeizing: I would put all the candles in tin ſockets not worth a penny each! deſire all the people to take their books with them when they depart from worſhip---not to ſuffer any cuſhion to remain in the chapel or in the pulpit on the Sunday after the ſervice is over, however troubleſome or inconvenient this may be. If the organ itſelf is deemed a fixture, I would take the pipes out of it, ſhut it up, and ſing without it. In the room of the dial I would only let an hour glaſs appear on the pulpit; and in ſhort, hold forth to the public every evidence you can poſſibly give how vehemently you are perſecuted and how determined you are to reſiſt."

Rowland Hill had viſited *Worceſter* in 1771, 1774, and probably at other times before the year 1815, as alſo ſubſequently; but although he was much attached to the Counteſs of *Huntingdon* and her various flocks throughout the country, her ladyſhip's mode of governing them he ſuppoſed to be incompatible with neceſſary freedom on the part of the miniſters. Nevertheleſs he warmly coincided with this denomination in their

defence of the Church Eſtabliſhment and the adoption of her liturgy. In fact, no one ever exceeded him in his admiration of the ſpirituality and beauty of the Book of Common Prayer, and the homilies he was wont to call "good, ſound, old-faſhioned ſermons." A friend of his once ſaid, "If a man could but hear only half of the extempore prayers offered up in this country on any Sunday he would fall down on his knees in an ecſtacy to give vent to his thankfulneſs for the liturgy." "That he would, ſure enough," ſaid *Rowland*, "and let me aſk if a man's heart cannot reſpond to thoſe ſpiritual petitions which abound in our ſervice, what has grace done in it?" As to the exiſtence of an Eſtabliſhment, he on one occaſion ſaid, "You know that from time immemorial there has been a certain State ſaddle, and thoſe who have a firm ſeat on it will naturally kick off thoſe who try to get up behind, and if you could get on it you would do juſt the ſame." Moreover, he evinced his reſpect for the Church by cloſing his own chapel whenever a preacher of evangelical principles occupied the pulpit of the Eſtabliſhment, the ſervices of which he himſelf likewiſe attended, and invited all his flock to follow his example. "Poor *Rowland*" was one of the beſt pulpit beggars ever known, and was greatly depreſſed at a poor collection: "Had I my way (ſaid he) I would hang all

miſers, but by the reverſe of the common mode: I would hang them up by the heels, that their money might run out of their pockets, and make a famous ſcramble for you to pick up and put on the plate."

But to return from this digreſſion: The Rev. *Edward Lake* remained as paſtor at *Birdport* chapel for twenty-eight years, and then a miſunderſtanding occurred, which ended in his retirement from that ſphere of uſefulneſs. It would, however, be as uſeleſs as unwiſe to attempt to ſtate the merits of this unhappy contention. Upon his retirement, Mr. *Lake*, aſſiſted by ſome of his warm and ancient friends, took a ſmall chapel in Loweſmoor, in the year 1836, having purchaſed it of the Weſleyans (ſee p. 339), and officiated there for the laſt ſeven years of his life. He died in 1843, at the age of ſixty-four, after thirty-three years' reſidence in this city. He was a man much attached to the Church Eſtabliſhment, was eminently devoted to the great work in which his life was ſpent, and his ſociety was welcome far beyond the reſtricted circle of his own ſect.

After Mr. *Lake's* ſeceſſion from *Birdport* chapel it was for ſome time ſerved by ſupplies. Mr. *Hewlings* was the firſt permanent miniſter appointed, and in 1853 he was ſucceeded by the preſent eſtimable paſtor, the Rev. *T. Dodd.*

The temporary affairs of this chapel are conducted by a committee of management, elected annually at a meeting of the congregation, when the accounts are read for the paſt year. In the chapel deeds it is ſpecially provided that the prayers of the Church of *England* ſhall be uſed, alſo that the truſtees ſhall have the choice of the miniſters; but I believe the latter privilege is waived, the miniſters being choſen by the congregation. The members ſubſcribe to fifteen articles of belief, which are perfectly conſonant with the doctrinal articles of the Church of *England;* and the remaining articles they ſtate to be agreeable to their belief, but not eſſential to ſalvation. The ſchools connected with the chapel were eſtabliſhed in 1791, by the Rev. Mr. *Harris;* reorganiſed in 1799, by the Rev. *R. Bradley*, of *Mancheſter;* and for many years have been extenſively uſeful not only in the city but also in the ſurrounding neighbourhood. At preſent there are upwards of three hundred children, who are inſtructed by more than forty teachers. There are Sunday ſchool and congregational libraries, *Bible* claſſes, clothing clubs, ſubſcriptions to miſſions; *Dorcas*, Infant Friend, Diſtrict Viſiting, and Chriſtian Mutual Provident ſocieties, charities, and other means of extenſive uſefulneſs belonging to this connection. The late Mrs. *Gamidge* and Mrs. *Roberts* kindly be-

queathed a ſum of money, the intereſt of which is diſtributed in half-crowns, half-yearly, among the poor of the congregation, about Lady Day and Michaelmas. The ſacramental collections are alſo appropriated to the poor connected with the chapel. There being no endowment, the chapel is ſupported by quarterly ſubſcriptions and collections. There are two hundred free ſittings appropriated for the poor.

With regard to *Loweſmoor* chapel, at the death of Mr. *Lake* he was ſucceeded by Mr. *E. Bayfield*, Mr. *Woods*, Mr. *Sanderſon*, and Mr. *Henry Wardley*, the preſent miniſter. A conſiderable improvement was made in the chapel in 1860, and it was reopened on April 11th of that year. The front was renovated, and juſt within the porch a ſcreen was erected to prevent annoyance to the congregation from draughts or inclemency of the weather. The chapel was heated by means of *Haden's (Trowbridge)* apparatus, ſo arranged as to afford moderate and equal warmth to all parts of the building. The pews were ſtained and varniſhed and means taken to increaſe ſitting accommodation. A handſome new pulpit and communion rails were provided, and the ſpace within the rails and the pulpit ſtairs neatly carpeted. The colouring of the walls is *French* grey. In the centre of the ceiling is a large ground-glaſs light, of ſimilar principle to that in

the new picture gallery at *Witley Court*, and this is covered outſide with a ſkylight. A very handſome gilt chandelier of forty lights is ſuſpended below the window, and furniſhes abundant and effective light. Behind the chapel is a commodious ſchool-room recently erected, which may be uſed for the congregation during divine ſervice. This is ſeparated from the body of the chapel by temporary partitions on a novel principle, and ſo conſtructed as that they may be withdrawn. The ſchool-room is immediately in the rear of the pulpit, and when the communication is opened, in the manner deſcribed, any perſon ſitting within that apartment may hear diſtinctly the whole of the ſervice. The ſchool is occupied by the children on Sundays, ſo that they may not diſturb the congregation. Mr. *Joſeph Wood* (then Sheriff, now Mayor of the city) was both architect and builder, and too much praiſe cannot be awarded to the firm of *Wood* and Son for the manner in which they executed the works. The congregations at the reopening were numerous, and included many of the principal inhabitants of the city, amongſt them the Mayor and Mrs. *Haigh*, *R. Padmore*, Eſq., M.P., the Sheriff and family, Ald. *Lewis* and *Price*, ſeveral miniſters of different diſſenting denominations, &c. The ſermons were preached by the Rev. *Robert Steel*, miniſter of the *Scotch* chapel, *Cheltenham*.

In concluſion it may be ſtated that the Counteſs of *Huntingdon's* connection differ from the Weſleyans by holding the doctrinal articles of the Church in their Calviniſtic ſenſe; from the Baptiſts, by the adminiſtration of baptiſm to infants, and that by ſprinkling or pouring; from the Independents, in admitting the lawfulneſs and in many caſes the expediency of uſing a Scriptural liturgy; from the Church herſelf, in being free to employ whatever they deem valuable and to refuſe what appears to them objectionable in her ſervices, while they are exempt from the influence to which they believe ſhe is expoſed by her union with the State.

The End.

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